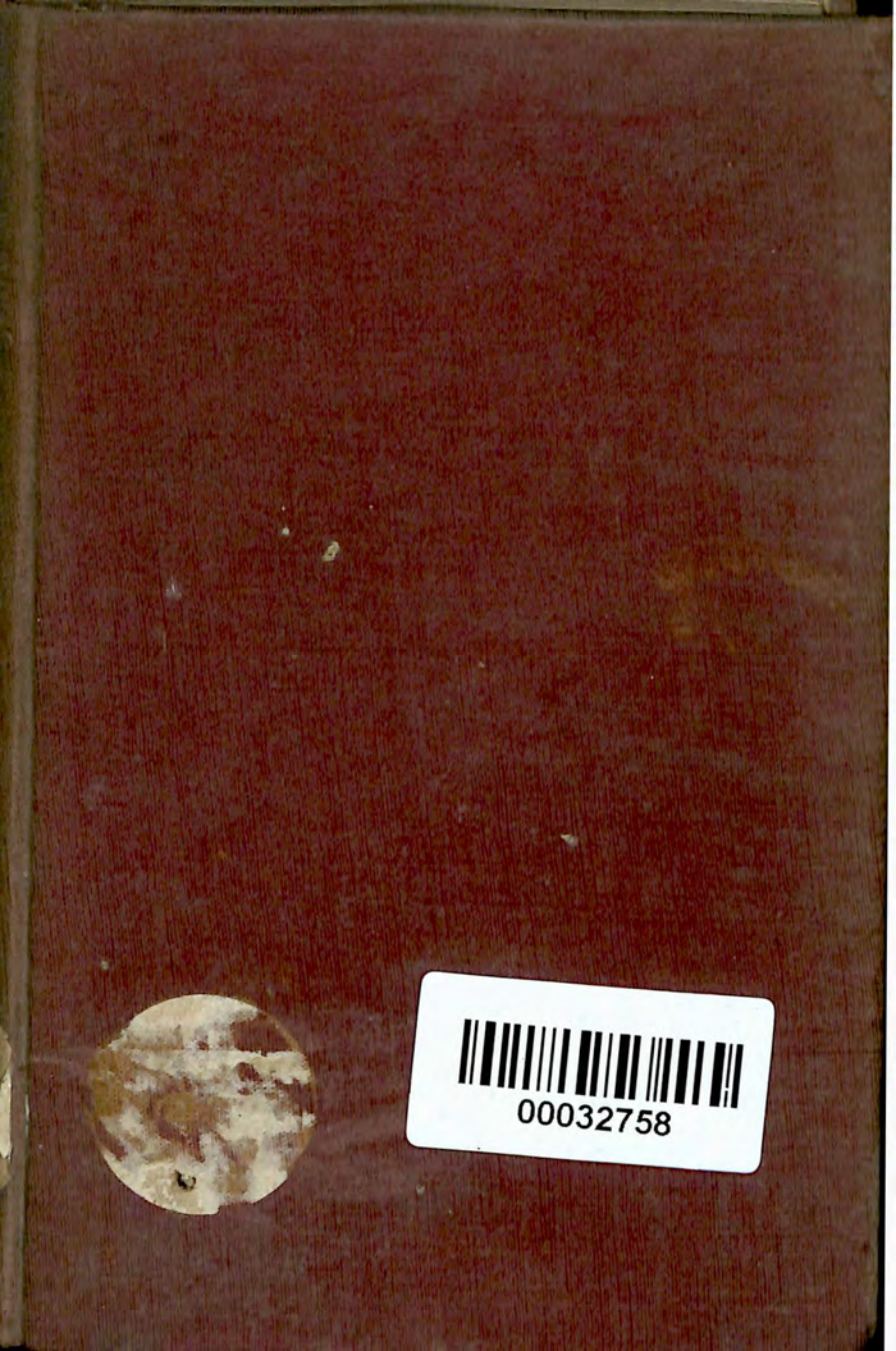
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BORDER LANDS

OF

SPAIN AND FRANCE

WITH

AN ACCOUNT OF A VISIT

TO

THE REPUBLIC OF ANDORRE.

32758

LONDON:
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PREFACE.

If it be inquired on what ground I have ventured to give publication to the present record of a visit to the Mountains of South-Western Europe while the sympathies of my countrymen are still wholly directed to the frontiers of Asia, and to a journal which neither professes to describe a region for the most part new, nor attempts to enter deeply into the subjects with which it deals, I answer, that it was commenced with no other view than that of affording amusement to some idle mornings in the country during the dreary season of an English autumn—that it forms a simple narrative, which I have since had leisure neither to

correct nor to improve, of what I did and of what I saw—that it attempts to portray those social peculiarities which exist in the unvisited districts of the Pyrenees, and that Political Liberty which has now withdrawn to the mountains from the broad lands of Europe—and that it aims at a description of an almost unknown and independent Republic (ancient as the temporal dominion of the Papacy), whose records, while they throw additional light on the annals of the early Moorish wars, serve also to corroborate the testimony of the historians of the Carlovingian Age,—and whose title-deeds, being the original charters of the Emperor Charlemagne; are by four hundred years more ancient than the surviving documents of any one of the German or Italian Republics.

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Europe, from the conflicts between Carthage and Rome to the conflicts between Arabia and France. In later times it was bound up with our own mediæval story, and with the legends which sprang from the great period of Romance. Each glen still told some tale of ancient lore, and each ruined tower some bygone deed of chivalrous renown.

But I found, as my wanderings brought me from time to time from the imaginary to the real world, yet more to interest and attract in the varieties of political institution, and the prominent idiosyncrasies of social character, which exist among the border lands of Spain and France. The cardinal distinctions between the Spaniards and the French absorb but a very small proportion of the phases of Pyrenean life. I shall attempt, accordingly, to offer a description of my visit to the Basque population, and of their manners and political institutions;—to the Béarnais, who yet preserve distinctions of character that have survived the original distinctions of their feudal polity;—to the isolated survivors of the proscribed races of the Cagots and the Colliberts, whose origin has long baffled the speculation of the antiquary and the his-

torian;—to the mountaineers of Arragon and of Catalonia, in their contrast with the social characteristics of the people of the plain;—to the Spanish Church, as it now exists in the northern provinces of the Peninsula;—to the relics of Roman architecture in the South of France, in reference to the light which they shed upon the history of conquest and of art;—and to the people of Cerdagne and Roussillon, who alone, I believe, of all the nations of Europe, continue the celebration of the mediæval drama. I shall also have to relate my impression of the government and social condition of the Republic of Andorre, which, while scarcely known to the people of this country, has maintained its independence for more than a thousand years, and is now, perhaps, the most ancient and conservative of the states of Europe.

It will be seen, then, whether the Pyrenees supply less than the lands of Eastern Europe of that incident and variety in which Thought is always most disposed to follow the footsteps of the traveller. The diversities of social life, as they present themselves in these regions, have scarcely yet been portrayed; nor do the few descriptions which have been given to us of

Pyrenean scenery exhaust a land of beauty and romance. To the traveller, the retrospect of the ever-varying populations with which he has mingled is not less bright, while it is more lasting than its reality;—the Past remains to him, if the Present dies.

But we pass to the historic records of the famous Bayonne. Few of the fortified cities of France are so rich in the associations of the past. There, on the summit of the hill, stood the Gothic cathedral pile, where grey and time-worn walls told of an ancient Christian zeal, and where the fair record of the chivalry of the House of Plantagenet still glistened upon its fretted roof.* There, without the fortifications, and amid luxuriant groves of lime, where Napoleon had schemed the subjugation of the Peninsula, now stood, in ruins, the once beautiful Château de Marrac, in poetical justice to the wrongs and calamities of Charles of Spain.†

* The arms of England are still visible on the roof of the cathedral.

† King Charles of Spain, after having been decoyed out of Spain at the instigation of Napoleon, was forced to sign his abdication of the throne while entertained by him at the Château de Marrac. The château was subsequently burnt during the reign of Charles X.

There arose the wide circumvallation, yet bristling with cannon; and there, too, were still the deep trenches and the triple gates, which formed the bulwark of France against the encroachment of those German kings that once held the double sceptre of Arragon and Castile. There, again, was the scene which, in an elder day, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, chose for the consolation of his baffled hopes of the Castilian crown, and where the gay knights of Aquitaine and Poictou met. And there, too, well-nigh in our own day, on the banks of the Adour and the Nive, Wellington and Hope sustained the splendour of the old English name.

We left Bayonne. The railway from Paris being closed to the south of Bordeaux, we had a favourable opportunity of contrasting the beneficent inventor of steam with the malevolent machinator of the diligence. Between Bordeaux and Bayonne no relays of horses are provided for private travelling; and the tourist, who disdains the public conveyance, must choose between the pleasing alternatives of passing a week upon the road in the company of the identical horses with which he had started from Bordeaux;

of waiting at that odoriferous city, for a similar period, until the requisite relays may be supposed to have reached their respective destinations; or, finally, of making a pedestrian excursion over flat and sandy plains. Yet the diligence continues to crowd at least an equal degree of misery into the twenty or twenty-four hours of its transit between the two cities. The summer days, in this land of monopoly of public conveyance, are preternaturally hot; and the vehicles, on some unexplained principle of natural philosophy, (beneficent, no doubt, in its general operation,) seem so constructed as to absorb the whole heat of the sun. Then the weariness of two leagues an hour, varied only by being alternately buried in the deepest dust and jolted upon the roughest stones—or, in other words, by fancying one's self to be travelling upon the plains of Libya and the roads of Turkey—till there grows a variety in the very monotony. Then the incessant rattling of the bells on the horses' shoulders, varied again by the senseless ejaculations of the conductor—*sacré nom du diable*—at each turning of the road, as though, if there had been any original sanctity in the

name of the devil, it had not long ago been diluted away by the ceaseless profanations of the French. To an orthodox priest, who adopted this mode of conveyance on his religious missions, there might arise this faint consolation, indeed—that he was anticipating the enjoyment of a future purgatorial state by regular instalments upon earth!

Then comes the night, with its stifling heat, and the predilections of the South for closed windows. Conclusive is its experience against the theory of those who would determine the question of the plurality of inhabited worlds according to the existence of a surrounding oxygen, for a Frenchman will subsist for the whole night with no atmosphere whatever! The same monotony continues, but intensified in force, as the weary hours of dark expand into "ages of hopeless end." The extremes of heat and cold must surely produce a common influence on the brain; for, like an Arctic adventurer, an Englishman in a diligence instinctively feels at length that his intellects are deserting him. Yet the torture of the passenger, after all, can scarcely equal that of those barely animated spectres, which pass under the euphonism of horses; and

he alights from his prison-house, at his journey's end, with the sombre reflection that, if there were only a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals abroad, he might fairly be indicted as an accessory to their persecution!

The scenery between Bayonne and the Spanish frontier, although the mountain passes of the interior command, no doubt, sublimer prospects, is, perhaps, the most beautiful and varied to be obtained from any carriage-road in Europe. The distance is about twenty-five miles. The road crosses the Nivelle, enters the Basque countries, and sweeps over the western spur of the Pyrenean mountains, descending again to the waters of the Bidassoa, which divide the French from the Spanish territory. The whole country here presents a vast expanse of wild mountain heather, varied by the foliage of the cork-tree and the birch, the high land still undulating in hill and vale, and the intense verdure of the surrounding scene contrasting beautifully with the azure peaks which terminate the view. Midway towards the frontier we passed the ancient town of St. Jean de Luz, where the châteaux occupied by Louis XIV. and the Infanta, in 1660, perpetuate the association of that fatal

dynastic alliance which completed the moral misery and the political degradation of Spain.* From that point the ascending slope displays the variety of the scene. Before us were the beauty and fertility of Navarre; to the left, far as the eye could reach, loomed those grand mountain heights that spanned the Atlantic and the Mediterranean shores; while on my left still flowed, as they flowed of old, the sapphire waves of Biscay.

The approach to the Bidassoa now brought us to the theatre of those modern victories, more marvellous in their simple truth than the fabled deeds of all the Paladins of Charlemagne. The mountain passes through which Wellington here forced his way, already, as it seemed, impregnable by Nature, were strengthened in his day by every fortification which Art could devise. Those military defences have long since passed away; but the wild mountains of Behobia, and the scaled precipices of the Arrhune, which

* The occupation of these châteaux by Louis XIV. and the Infanta took place previously to their marriage, and in consequence of the Pyrenean Treaty of 1659, in virtue of which the dynastic alliance of the two countries was afterwards concluded.

encircle the passage into France, still attest the inexhaustible fertility of the great man's genius. Yet how varied were the political associations of the scene! At the base of these heights stood the ancient château, where, nearly four centuries ago, that prince whom I may term Louis Reynard, the Valois king, held his famous interview with John of Arragon. A few steps further, in the river Bidassoa, lay what yet remained of the historic Island of Pheasants, still associated with the infatuation of Leopold—with, perhaps, the solitary blunder of Cromwell—with the crowning achievement and the consummating glory of Cardinal Mazarin's administration.*

At the period of my crossing into Spain a revolutionary movement was pending at Madrid,

* It was on this island, as I need hardly observe, that the Pyrenean Treaty was signed by the diplomatists of France and Spain. In regard to the conduct of Cromwell, although that general died in the year preceding that in which the treaty in question was signed, the disastrous result of its conditions to the balance of power is clearly to be referred to his policy in allying England with France against Spain. Lord Bolingbroke, referring to the notion that his opinions at the time of his death were undergoing a change on the subject of his foreign policy, observes:—"Little as I honour his memory, I should have wished that he had lived longer."

and every traveller who passed the frontier was watched with unusual jealousy and suspicion. A wooden bridge, which traversed the river, formed the neutral territory intervening between the two countries; and two sentinels, or *gens-d'armes*, were posted like automatons at either end of the bridge, the faithful and devoted servants respectively of the Emperor Napoleon and of Queen Isabella. The narrowness of the stream would readily have admitted of a conversation being sustained between the opposite banks, but the delegated authorities on the bridge held no more communication than if they had each been defending the pass against a hostile irruption from the other. At the French frontier village of Behobia, on the banks of the river, travellers were stopped for a final examination of their passports by the Imperial authorities, and during this formality they were graciously permitted to repair for refreshment at the little Café Thiers, which had been christened in honour of the political demonstrator of 1840. The ceremony concluded, the French civilians bade me adieu in a manner indicative of a sympathy for one who could exchange the luxury and civilisation of France for the bar-

barism of Spain, and I soon found myself on the neutral bridge.

But here a ludicrous difficulty bade fair to await us. The gens-d'armes on the French frontier, after another examination of our credentials, had satisfied themselves that we were duly *visé*ed out of France; but the satisfaction of the Spanish gens-d'armes that we were also duly *visé*ed into Spain was quite an independent question. With the endorsement of our passports by the Consul of Queen Isabella at Bayonne the French authorities had no concern; but a slight irregularity in this respect, such as we believed to exist, would have been viewed in a very different light on the other side of the bridge. The Spaniards, in short, would for this reason have refused us admission into their territory, while the French would most assuredly not have permitted our return, inasmuch as we had already been *visé*ed out of France, and had brought, on our return, no recognition of our political respectability from the Spanish police.

Here, then, to all ages we might have wandered on the neutral bridge—the eternal pilgrims of the Bidassoa! Exiled and expatriated—neither Englishmen, Frenchmen, nor Spaniards

—we should have been living natural and political phenomena, partaking more of the character of neutral existences than of physical and national beings. . Here, in truth, we should have been immortalised in future legend as the genii of the stream, and have roamed like departed spirits on the shores of the everlasting Styx! Close beside the bridge lay the relics of the famous Isle of Pheasants; but in the course of two centuries it had nearly dwindled away, although the place still seemed haunted by the memory of Mazarin and De Haro, and of poor Velasquez who died of his inglorious transformation into an upholsterer!*

The gens-d'armes, however, after regarding us with the utmost suspicion, allowed us to enter Spain; but our congratulations on escaping the dominion of the bridge of Behobia proved to be somewhat premature. A short drive further brought us to the frontier village of Irun, on the Spanish bank of the river, and here we

* Velasquez, it will be remembered, was employed by his government, on the occasion of the signature of the Pyrenean Treaty, to decorate the Spanish Pavilion on the island.

became the objects of the double vigilance of the douane and the police. Our luggage was examined with a scrutiny which implied a conviction that we were importing dangerous combustibles and infernal machines for the final subversion of the existing government at Madrid, and our writing-cases were subjected to a process which evinced a corresponding belief that they would either develope fresh political conspiracies against the central administration, or that they at least contained means of pecuniary supply to one or other of the parties arrayed in the cause of the civil war. Meanwhile we were interrogated by the police in regard to the object of our journey.

The chief of the gens-d'armes was an unpleasing instance of the human species, with one glaring eye emerging from a green shade which covered the counterpart of his face, repulsive in his physiognomy and deformed in person, and looking altogether something between Caliban and a Cyclops.

To his first inquiry, I replied that we were travelling for pleasure and for health.

"It is remarkable," he drily replied, in bad

French and with Spanish impudence, "how strongly revolutionary movements invariably inspire gentlemen with a love of the picturesque."

I indignantly denied the insinuation he had thrown out. We had no political designs; we were going to San Sebastian, to be present at the bull-fight.

"Foreigners," he replied, "whose faces we have never seen before, are frequently seized, in times of civil disorder, with an unaccountable desire to be present at our bull-fights. It is singular how they flock across the frontier at these times, regardless, no doubt, of political affairs." Dropping his sarcastic manner, he added the inquiry, "What are your opinions?"

It was then the middle of July: it was impossible to say who at that moment was master of the capital, and consequently impossible to determine whether this sublime functionary were, at this juncture, in the Moderado or the Progresista interest. To cut, therefore, the Gordian knot which I could not untie, I answered that I had no Spanish politics.

Had it not been for my disavowal of political opinions, I might have endeavoured to escape

the difficulty by a vehement denunciation of the Carlists. This, however, would have implied a revocation of all that I had said before. Thinking, nevertheless, that there was more suspicion in silence than there was hazard in a general remark, I answered, "in such guise that he could make nothing of it," that while I professed no controversial politics, I had at heart the welfare of Spain and of Queen Isabella; that I admired the conservative traditions of the nation; and that I felt sure that no reforms would be ultimately adopted in the State inconsistent with the ancient spirit of its government.

This observation, which might have served either for a defence of the moderation of the Progresistas, or for a vindication of the just policy of the Moderados, was, however, apparently understood by the Chief of Police in the sense coinciding with his own equally dispassionate views; for he made me a bow; smiled as graciously as his distorted physiognomy would permit; and restricted his objections to my passage to the circumstance that one of the counter-signatures of my passport had not the corroboration of the

consul's seal. This error, however, was still unpardonable. He intimated that a compliance with the formality in question was, in his view, an eternal and immutable requisition: the police laws of Spain altered not. Against the walls of his bureau, indeed, were suspended the conditions of admission into the Spanish territory: he there pointed triumphantly to this very ordinance, engraven at once in French, in Spanish, and in Basque—a trilingual inscription of a Medo-Persian law!

At length, however, we were once more upon our journey; and a three-hours' drive over a fertility of soil, and amid a luxuriance of vegetation unknown to lands lying to the northward of the Pyrenees, brought us to San Sebastian. This place surpassed my expectations. I have seen none to equal it, even on the shores of the Bosporus itself. The town is modern, and built upon the low ground, beside a landlocked bay nearly enclosed on either side by a gigantic pyramidal height — the Herculean Pillars of Northern Spain — on one of which stood the old fortress which foreign arms had so frequently assailed, while on the summit of the other were still the picturesque ruins of an elder day; as

the wild mountain crags on the Euxine shore are still crowned, amid the surrounding monuments of the Turk, by some desolated relic of the ancient glory of Genoa or Byzantium.* Round the enormous base of that on which the fortress stood a winding path led to the summit, the cone projecting beyond the margin of the adjacent land, like a bastion of Nature implanted in the sea. From the apex of the mountain, the sky just above us, earth and ocean lay beneath in illimitable expanse.

Biarrits, the sea-side watering-place on the French frontier of the Pyrenees, has not the attractions of San Sebastian. It has none of its grand scenery, and offers little but quietude in exchange for its beauty and variety. The bathing which it affords, though generally praised in France, is incomparably inferior to that at Sebastian. The presence of the Emperor and the Empress had decked it, during my visit, in its gayest colours. Their Majesties, however, were leading a very retired life; and the whole population maintained an amphibious existence,

* There are also the ruins of a lighthouse on this hill, and they have singularly absorbed the celebrity of the ancient fortress.

spending one half the day in bathing in the water, and the other half in basking on the shore. The bathing of Biarrits was restricted almost entirely to a single creek, which was appropriated at once to the ladies, the gentlemen, and the common people. A peculiar dress —something apparently between macintosh and tarpauling in point of consistency (either substance being singularly adapted to a development of the good effects of sea-bathing!)—was worn by the bathers while in the sea, as well as during a subsequent morning lounge along the shore. In the same dress, at the same hour of the day, and in the same place, nearly the whole population bathed, from the Emperor and the Empress to the peasant and the peasant's wife. His Majesty's example was readily followed by this aquatic population; and I reached the sands of Biarrits one morning from Bayonne,

> "Quum Proteus, consueta petens è fluctibus antra,
> Ibat; eum circum vasti gens humida ponti,
> Exultans, rorem latè dispersit amarum!" etc.

The Sovereign of France seemed to live in the security of a constitutional monarch; and from

that remote corner of the empire the Red Republicans and other Revolutionists appeared to be effectually banished.

I reached San Sebastian on a Saturday afternoon, the following Sunday being an especial high-day, and consequently to be commemorated by a bull-fight. The 'blood of bulls' seemed to be as much a sacrifice of the Spanish Church as of the ancient theism of the East! As I entered the town, knots of individuals were collected here and there in the streets, each earnestly inquiring of the other in regard to the training or the ferocity of the animals; and their very physical origin was discussed with an interest similar to that with which Bunsen or Prichard might have discussed the physical history of mankind. Connoisseurs discovered a great difference, in point of pugnacity, between the bulls of one province and those of another; and the question was thus held to be one of infinite moment. The hotels were crowded; visitors had arrived even from Madrid, attracted by the celebrity of the Sebastian bull-fight, which took place but once a-year, and was proportionately famous. Accommodation in the town would, indeed, have been difficult to procure,

had not the easy manners of the Spanish families admitted of their being generally quartered in the same apartment. They serve to remind one of "the happy families," or discordant congregations of animals in a single cage, in our own country.

The morning came, with its bathing, its prayers, and its masses; yet who thought of anything but the bull-fight? A throng, ostensibly devout, gathered to the celebration of mass, and the gay dresses and bonnets, which were destined to enliven the amphitheatre, vied with the attire of the priests; but as the bulls were the only subject of conversation without the ecclesiastical walls, it was fair to conclude that they formed the only subject of meditation within.

At length came the great epoch of a Spanish Sunday. As the hour of three o'clock in the afternoon approached, the avenues leading to the amphitheatre were crowded by the destined spectators. We took our places in the upper circles of this building, beneath the shade of the roof, which extended but a few feet from the extreme circumference. In the Roman edifices, the upper seats were devoted to the plebeians; but although

this custom was reversed in Spain—so far, at least, as a difference in price might work the separation of ranks—the inferior height of the modern amphitheatre gave a similar elevation to the seat of the higher classes of Iberia and of Rome. The whole building, although a miserable imitation of the ancient amphitheatres, held from eight to ten thousand. Nearly half the upper seats were occupied by Spanish ladies. Not content with this unladylike, not to say unchristian, celebration of the day, they brought their children, from five years old upwards, to the spectacle, as though purposely to instil a precocious ferocity into the rising generation.

The arena was as gay as the place of the spectators. The picadors, who were mounted, were dressed in green and gold, equipped with flags and staves, and protected, as far as possible, against the eventuality of too close an encounter. The chulos, on foot, were similarly dressed, and carried banderillos and flags. Twenty-four bulls were designed for slaughter in the amphitheatre, and the diversion was intended to last for four days.

The first bull now entered the lists; the

chulos leapt the paling into the outer circle, and in an instant the bull leapt it after them. A momentary consternation seized those who now for the first time were present at the sport; for what should prevent him from vaulting the next paling, charging the spectators, and carrying the position, as it were, at the point of his horns? I afterwards discovered that an iron railing, rising some feet above the woodwork, protected us from attack. The bull now pursued the chulo between the two palings, and the chulo, finding himself outrun, leapt back into the arena. The bull re-entered, and charged the picador, whose staff broke in the first onset. A momentary struggle followed; the agonised horse, transfixed by the horns, reeled in his frantic endeavour to escape, and finally floundered on the ground, his rider half beneath him and half beneath the feet of the bull. The spectators cheered; the ladies shrieked with excitement and delight. A fresh attack from the bull left the blinded horse dying on the arena. The picador, escaping between the bull's feet, was rewarded by a cheer, not unmingled, perhaps, with disappointment that he too was not stretched lifeless on the ground. The bright colours of the chulos

now drew off the bull. Again the fugitive and the foe leapt into the outer circle, and again they found themselves in the arena. Again ensued the contest with the mounted picadors. The excitement in the galleries increased. The bull bellowed till the amphitheatre seemed to echo. Assaulting another mounted picador, whose already wounded and blinded horse could barely stand, and which vainly turned and turned to escape an antagonist that he could not see, he suddenly overthrew both, and piercing the picador with his horns, hurled him over his head; and in another second the rider fell upon the ground a lifeless corpse. Weakened by incessant torment, he could now no longer vault the paling of the arena. He had fought for half an hour, when the matadore entered with his sword, and in a few moments stretched him lifeless on the ground. The music followed; the three mules now entered the arena; the bull, fastened to their traces by his once redoubtable horns, was drawn away at a gallop; sand was sprinkled over the place of his death-blow, and the second bull entered the lists.

The same scene was re-enacted with little variation. The bull was more savage than his

predecessor, and the contest evinced a greater refinement of cruelty. The chulos, on this occasion, hurled at him their banderillos, of which the points were encircled with fireworks that exploded on the animal's back, yielding a report like musketry, and setting his fur and skin in a general blaze. Again came the matadore and the mules, and the scene closed like the preceding one. The third bull appeared, and was drawn out by the mules in turn: the fourth, the fifth, and the sixth, underwent similar attacks, displayed similar ferocity, and shared a similar fate. The Corso del Toros had lasted for three hours; the appetites of the Spaniards were satiated for the day; the rabble in the lower galleries bounded over the fence into the arena, which was soon filled with the dregs of the population. The spectators began to disappear, and amid a terrific storm of thunder and lightning, which seemed to imply the wrath of Heaven on the cruelty and profanity of man, we issued forth from the amphitheatre. The dusk, which in these regions sets in after sunset with a tropical rapidity, had veiled the surrounding scenery from our view; but the electric flashes in the sky displayed ever and anon the form of

the old sea-girt fortress that crowned the lofty height of Sebastian, and flashed over the fire-lit bay, which seemed a vast blazing crystal.

After the bull-fight San Sebastian dined. But it was the last day for which it was prudent to dine in Sebastian, for the question involuntarily arose at dinner, — what became of the slaughtered bulls? After this interlude the streets were again alive, and the great Plaza was thronged with the faces of the fair, and filled with the strains of music. The storm was spent, and the stars shone bright, as though the returning mercy of Heaven had forgiven the profanation of the day.

There is nothing dramatic in the character of a bull-fight, nor is there any poetical justice in its termination. I know of no such exhibition, on a similar scale, of savage cruelty—of none which admits so little that is intellectual into its composition. A dramatic representation, in which tragic acts involving the murder of two or three human beings, and the death of seven or eight animals, with every circumstance of aggravation which torture could supply, were carried out in fact, would strike us in this country (as I believe it would for

the moment strike also the theatrical world at Madrid) as a monstrous crime. Yet it would be difficult to show that the sin of a bull-fight were really less, while the faint palliation of a moral, or of dramatic truth, could not be pleaded for the amphitheatre. If it were right to beautify a crime in the cloak of an art, I should not despair of so changing the character of the spectacle as to infuse into it some at least of the elements of the drama; but the prominence of an irrational animal in the scene would, of course, render impossible any near approximation to dramatic excellence. The poetic justice of the fight is glaringly deficient. The bull, indeed, ostensibly begins the contest, but he has already been maddened into unnatural ferocity; the horses take but a passive part in the encounter, yet they suffer nearly equally with the bulls; while the chulos and picadors, who are the torturers of both, are injured far less frequently than either; and the assembly—the real authors at once of the physical suffering and the moral crime—escape scot free. The unexpected entry of a seventh bull, when the rabble, at the close of the entertainment, had descended into the arena, might in some degree supply the defect: but

it would still exclude the more responsible part of the spectators from this species of poetical justice. The principle of the bull-fight, then, is simply brutal, and the retribution is inversely proportioned to the evil action.

Such is one of the leading predilections of the Spanish people. Their history is that of a long reign of social degradation, lightened up by a short interval of political glory. Shame and dishonour have ever checkered their splendour and renown. The original consolidation of their monarchy was marked by the worst injustice and oppression. That great geographical discovery which founded their commercial wealth, and presented another world to the civilising agency of the Christian Church, was tainted by a cruelty and a thirst of human blood, which had for its arena, not the narrow space of the amphitheatre, but the territories of whole races of mankind. That freedom of thought which first saw beyond the Atlantic wave, and that wealth of intellect which roused the jealous rivalry of the English drama, were attended by a religion which debased the heart and shackled the very soul of man. That nation of Europe which was the first to draw benefit

from the Western world, would be the last to prolong its subjugation and slavery: and that Government which, beyond all others, on the fall of the mediæval system, was imperious and strong, has since been, beyond all others, humiliated by foreign and domestic war.

And if, in the present condition of Spain, we see the working of a national retribution, that retribution has been exclusively the result of political influences. The cause of the combination of so brilliant a passage in history with such transient glory, rests, I believe, in the fact that, while Spain possessed a powerful government, she never possessed anything more than the elements of a great people. For the space of a century, indeed, the Court of Madrid enjoyed all the artificial and extrinsic attributes of political power; but in the heart of the nation there have never existed those high social conditions which are the pillars of durable empire. The established religious system which, in our own country, is the bond of civilisation and of social order, in its operation in Spain, either withers the soul into almost inanimate degradation, or impels it to the corresponding extreme of lawless infidelity. This glaring antagonism

to high moral principle extends from the priesthood to the people, as it has extended from the people to the state. And therefore it is certain, that no ultimate peace can be secured to Spain by any mere blending of the Progresistas, of the Moderados, and of the Carlists. And that peace, I believe, is to be attained only by a gradual and comprehensive social reform, based originally on a system of government which shall combine all the conservatism which can be allied with progress, with all the liberty which is compatible with order.

CHAPTER II.

VISIT TO THE BASQUE PROVINCES.

I NOW found myself in the Basque provinces of Spain; and proceeded to visit that singular population, in the Western border-lands of the Spanish and French territories, whose origin has defied the research of antiquarians, whose language has not yielded to the classifications of philology, and whose political institutions have survived the revolutions of nearly a thousand years. In the Basques, in truth, all the unexampled political traditions of that people seemed yet to live. They were still the Basques whose ancient hardihood had supported the tradition that they had overthrown the legions of Charlemagne, and clouded the glory of the Austrasian Cæsar, in the Pass of Roncesvalles; who, asserting their distinction alike from the Spaniard and the Frank, assailed the rear of the victorious armies of Wellington; and

who had arrayed themselves against the chivalry of the English Plantagenets. In our own days, their territory had been a stronghold of the Carlists; and they were now ready to rise again in defence of the standard of the Pretender.

The reader will share the interest of the traveller in their ethnological, their political, and their social idiosyncrasy. They were, in fact, a living caricature of every theory of government, and a living paradox to every principle of domestic life. They were the proudest and nearly the most necessitous of mankind. They were the hardest labourers in the field, and the most exclusive aristocrats in the world. They envied the wealth and the ascendancy of the Central Government of Spain, and they despised the oldest noblesse of Castile as the very mushrooms of society. Their landowners held more frequently but a few acres of the soil, and they would have derided as ludicrous the pretensions of Prince Lichtenstein or Prince Esterhazy. Their mechanical arts continued in their ancient barbarism, and they would have set down the people of Manchester for intolerable impostors. Their house-doors were emblazoned with coats-of-arms, and their dwellings were devoid of the

most ordinary requirements of social life. Their genealogies transcended those of the Austrians and the Scotch, and their civilisation was inferior to that of most European nations. They considered themselves, *par excellence*, the gentlemen of Europe; and they constituted themselves, *par excellence*, the boors of Spain!

This may be a fair, though imperfect, summary of their social character. Before, however, I relate my visit to this people, in illustration of that character, let me briefly sketch their political constitution.

I do not affect to state the political character of the Basque provinces with absolute precision, or to penetrate far into a history which is necessarily more or less obscure. These provinces, constituting the ancient Cantabria, are three in number—Alava, Biscay, and Guipuzcoa. They are bounded by Navarre, by Castile, by Asturias, and by the Ocean. A portion of the Basque population extends northward into France, to a line running nearly midway between the Bidassoa and Bayonne. The Basques, in ancient times, successively underwent the transient and imperfect subjugation of the Roman, of the Goth, and of the Moor. Their maritime conquest by the

Northmen, towards the close of the ninth century, was more complete; and it exerted a durable influence over their character and their government, which other conquests were unable to impose. To this event it is usual to ascribe their free polity, their aristocratic predilections, and their fair complexion, which constitutes, in Spain, a physical peculiarity. But their notions of independence, like those of Lacedæmon, were born, in great degree, of their mountainous soil; and their military hardihood (if they may really be traced to the victors of Roncesvalles) was illustrated—even irrespectively of the question of their Iberian origin—nearly a century before their subjugation by the Northmen.

The cardinal territorial distinction between France and Spain, at this day, consists, perhaps, in the completeness of the one, and in the imperfection of the other, in point of political centralisation. The Basque provinces form the extreme illustration of this contrast. The genius of that which I may term mediæval provincialism has, indeed, nearly everywhere in Spain, proved too strong for the triumph of modern centralisation. But this provincialism, in Basqueland, has been maintained in nearly its original

integrity; and although the provinces in question underwent a jural incorporation with the Castilian monarchy, the Basque laws were retained in practice, in exclusion of any conflicting legislation which the Central Government might have sought to impose. It would be impossible, however, to rank the Basque provinces as independent states,—as the Republic of Andorre is an independent state,—in spite of the latitude with which modern jurists have invested the doctrine of political independence. These provinces are rather states whose dependence on the Central Government rests upon the condition of certain constitutional rights, more or less defined by the immemorial practice both of themselves and of that Central Government. Nor is this definition, I think, in any greater degree compromised by the fact that successive sovereigns of Spain have endeavoured to subvert these conditions of independence, than the jural right of Hungary, in 1849, to the exercise of its own constitutional rights, was destroyed by their arbitrary suppression by the Court of Vienna in that period.

The leading differences, then, according to the theory of the constitution, between the

government of the Basque provinces and that of other territories of the Spanish crown, may be stated to be—first, that these provinces have been traditionally governed by *Fueros*, or ancient national laws, customs, and prescriptions, which were first compiled into a regular digest in the reign of Charles I. in 1526. 'Secondly, the Basques, like the Rayahs of the Ottoman Empire, are exempt from the military conscription of the Spanish kingdom. Like that community, also, they pay a certain capitation-tax in compensation for this immunity. Thirdly, the extent and character of internal taxation is regulated, not by the central government, but by the local legislatures of the provinces; and when so regulated and paid to the national exchequer, is termed, not a tribute, but a donation. Fourthly, the maintenance of public order is consigned to a local militia-force, chosen by each district or *partido*. Fifthly, the provinces do not acknowledge the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Spanish prelates, the administration of the Church being consigned to a sacerdotal commonwealth. And, sixthly, it may be observed that the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction over each village rests, in subordination to superior authority, in the

hands respectively of the *alcalde* and the *cura*, who correspond to the cadi and mufti of the Turkish system.

I now left San Sebastian for Tolosa, the capital of the province of Guipuzcoa. It would have been matter of curiosity to the humblest politician to observe what sort of centralisation had been achieved by a race so isolated from other families of mankind in all their modes of life. They formed, indeed, the collective impersonation of monopoly, of isolation, of ignorance, and of conceit. Of every member of the Basque community it might be said,—

> "He saw with his own eyes the moon was round,
> Was also certain that the earth was square,
> Because he had travelled fifty miles, nor found
> A sign that it was circular anywhere!"

The first difficulty to be surmounted consisted in the Basque language. No man, as an adult at least, had been ever yet able to master either its construction or its pronunciation. To pass from the civilisation of Sebastian into the heart of the provinces without a guide, was to run the risk of starvation from the difficulty of communicating one's wishes, and to encounter the certainty of learning nothing

of the institutions of the people. To find either a Basque who understood French or Spanish, or a Frenchman or a Spaniard who understood the Basque language — and who withal would condescend to be my dragoman — involved a very high degree of improbability. This difficulty being, however, at length overcome, we proceeded on our journey. Our road led us through Hernani, midway between Sebastian and Tolosa. The soil continued indeed to exhibit the fertility which had marked our first entrance into Guipuzcoa, but the peculiarities of the Basques extended even to 'the staff of life;' and instead of cultivating wheat, they subsisted upon maize. Everywhere in the fields the population gave signs of an agricultural industry, which the warlike genius of the Basque people rendered the more praiseworthy. The Basques, in truth, reminded me more nearly of the Servians than of any other people I had seen. By nature they were indisposed to the monotony of a laborious and regular life, and had been not more warlike in the ninth than they were at heart in the nineteenth century. But that "*duris urgens in rebus egestas*" had driven them, like the Servians, to bend use-

less lances into scythes, and change the broad falchion into a ploughshare, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Pope.

Like the Sardinians and the Swiss, the women and children were often working in the fields; and a considerable proportion of the population gained a livelihood in fishing. Either sex passed a laborious existence; and from the toil which it was the custom of the women to undergo, the men of nearly all other nations would have recoiled. Among the strangest peculiarities of the Basque women is the marvellous power of locomotion, which habit or constitution has assigned them. Between Bayonne and Fontarabia I remember to have met a troop of these half-gipsy Basque women running at a fast trot, with baskets of fish upon their heads, being bound from Fontarabia to Bayonne, a distance of perhaps thirty miles, which they generally accomplished in five or six hours! What need of beasts of burden in a land where Nature had showered such capacities upon man?

The little town of Hernani forms a sort of acropolis, built upon a mass of rock in the heart of a beautiful and fertile valley, watered by the Urumea, and encompassed by an amphitheatre of

heights, some clothed with every variety of foliage that the luxuriance of Spain showers upon her mountain sides; others, bare as Alpine rocks, rising in pyramidal forms, and their peaks either crowned with some ruined monument of traditionary war, or culminating in the clouds. This scene of natural wildness and social isolation seemed to have been created to illustrate the independent character of the Basques.

I was curious to pay my respects, as we passed through a village on my route to Tolosa, to the Alcalde and the Cura; as on the Asian soil I had been interested to visit the Cadi and the Mufti of the Mussulman rule. This sublime duumvirate constituted, in Basque-land, the impersonation of State and Church. Both functionaries greeted the traveller with every mark of civility. I congratulated the Alcalde on the excellence of the political institutions in his province, on the dignity he enjoyed as the freely-elected ruler and representative of the community beneath his rule. I offered my felicitations to the Cura, as he discoursed upon ecclesiastical questions, on his happy exemption from the thraldom and the tyranny of the Spanish bishops. Either authority seemed by no means insensible

to the dignity of his exalted position, and to the right conception which had been formed of his importance by a wanderer in a strange land. I rapidly rose in the estimation alike of Alcalde and Cura. But it turned out that there was much that was illusory in the happy combination of civil and religious authority in these functionaries. The union, in truth, between State and Church—in this village, at least—was anything but a moral union. The Alcalde took an opportunity of informing me that the Cura was a meddlesome fellow, who was always interfering in civil affairs, and that he heartily wished that the Bishops of Navarre had a jurisdiction over him. The Cura, on the other hand, took a similar opportunity for saying that the Alcalde was a godless and good-for-nothing official, who wished to subvert the just influence of the Church, and believed in nothing but the divine origin of the principle of popular election!

The Alcalde was eloquent, as all his countrymen are eloquent, on the traditionary glories of the Basques. He was a plain, simple, uninstructed man; and with all his bitter jealousy of his rival in local authority, I could not but admire his fine countenance and patriotic spirit.

But he was well-enough versed in the legends of his race, an appreciation of which appeared, in the Basque provinces, to constitute the first instinct of human nature. He told me rather abruptly that he was a Basque, and that his ancestors had defeated Charlemagne in the Pass of Roncesvalles; thus settling the whole question at once that history and ethnology have rather had in dispute. I believe he looked upon that Englishman as a miserable *parvenu*, who could not say that his ancestors had fought in the Pyrenees *before* the days of the Black Prince.

The Alcalde pressed us, with a hospitality characteristic of the Basques, to take some refreshment before I proceeded to Tolosa. This hospitality, in truth, is common, I believe, to all rural and mountainous districts of the Continent; but it is peculiarly characteristic of the Béarnais and of the Basques. The invitation placed us in a dilemma. We were hungry enough, and there were no provisions to be purchased between this and Tolosa. To accept his offer, would delay our journey; and his pecuniary circumstances did not seem very obvious. To have declined it, would have given him offence, and ourselves a good deal of discomfort.

To have solved the conflict by offering him money (whatever might have been his poverty), would have transformed the hair on his head into porcupines' quills, and have brought the illustrious blood of Roncesvalles to absolute fermentation!

Following our host, we approached a dwelling, whose humble character contrasted strangely with the innumerable shields and coats-of-arms which encompassed the doorway. Shortness of sight, and still greater shortness of time, prevented my endeavouring to decipher these genealogical hieroglyphics, even so far as it might be possible to do so upon our principles of heraldry. Suffice it to say, that the ancestors of my host might have married some twenty heiresses, might have inherited some thirty properties, and might have received heraldic decorations for some forty services of chivalry and valour.

Either it was the hour for the Alcalde's dinner, or his lunch, or his *déjeúner à la fourchette*. We entered a low and ill-furnished room, which contrasted strangely with the heraldic ornaments on the outside. The Alcalde, after suspiciously looking around him, as though

to satisfy himself that the Cura (whom, he confidentially informed me, he believed to be nothing but a low-born Navarrois) was not behind him, sat down. After attending to his guests, he finally concentrated his attention on the satisfaction of his own appetite; a work, it appeared, of no ordinary labour in its accomplishment. He took pains to assure me that supper formed his principal meal; but, nevertheless, appeared to act in practice upon the principle recognised by the Baron of Bradwardine, in "Waverley," who took in a fortnight's provisions at a time, through his apprehension of another opportunity being indefinitely postponed. I mention this incident in illustration of the manners of the Basques, who consume more in a single meal than an Englishman would generally eat in a day or two.

I parted with my host, and we reached Tolosa. Here, then, I found myself in the capital of one of the three provinces of the Basques. Conceive only the moral grandeur to be attached to the idea of a capital of a nation of nobles! It was an idea, at the very suggestion of which a plain Englishman shrank into ineffable insignificance. The whole community were a national

aristocracy—an untitled aristocracy, if you will; but still, in their own view, and by common concession, an aristocracy. Such an aristocratic character was, however, obviously but an abstract idea, and a mere nullity. But the Basques were essentially a free people; and this consideration gave them a real peculiarity, as well of social as of political character.

The chief peculiarity of Tolosa rested in the venerable family traditions with which it was associated. The doors were not seldom covered with armorial bearings; and the moral atmosphere of the place seemed charged with an ancestral antiquity, which evidently, in the opinion of the Basques, extended far beyond the records even of the Septuagint chronology! Many of the older houses had been perpetually held by ancient families—a peculiarity resembling that of the free towns of Germany, and stood in the same ancestral relation to their owners with landed property in this country. Notwithstanding the aristocratic *liberté, égalité, et fraternité,* which pervaded the land, broad social distinctions, of course, existed. The Basque Hidalgo was the representative, or the caricature, of the Hun-

garian Magnate. His position, however, was infinitely below that of any one who would pass under the title of a country squire in England. But this social superiority was regarded simply as the factitious superiority of fortune, and was not held in any way to trench upon the aristocratic pretensions of the rest of the community.

As a result of the political isolation of the Basques, there was no development of the arts, even in their capitals. Their architecture was of a very ordinary character; and the fork, or pronged spade, which formed their chief implement in the fields, would have made a very indifferent figure in an English agricultural show. This isolation extended similarly to the relations of each of the provinces with the other; and though they were similar enough in social and political characteristics, their intercourse was infrequent. But while there was much to admire as well as much to ridicule, in their character, they were by far too obstinate and opinionated to have profited by any lessons which a social or political propagandist might have endeavoured to impose on them.

But what need of real advantages to a people

who were content to dwell in the supposititious glories of the past? That they were all noble by birth was a consolation for poverty, for ignorance, for every imaginable disaster, and a scornful repudiation of the pity which a foreigner might entertain for their condition. What a blessed Utopia was this, where the realities of fact were so effectually subordinated to the illusions of fancy! 'To have been' was, with the Basques, something infinitely greater than 'to be;' or rather, perhaps, 'to be' was entirely comprehended in the idea of nobility. It was a new psychological fact, that while the body lived in the present, the soul should dwell in the past; and it implied a species of retrogressive metempsychosis unknown to the speculation of antiquity!

Near Tolosa I witnessed the celebration of one of the religious holidays, if I may use the term, which form a leading custom of the Basques. On these occasions Bacchus is worshipped with the devotion of ancient times, through the medium of the grape—a circumstance which I shall not readily forget; for the sour wine of the Basque provinces inflicted upon me another attack of the gout, which filled me with painful apprehensions of the suffering ex-

istence which it might hereafter be my destiny to undergo, if it should please Providence to prolong my days to the age of thirty. It is at these festivals that many of the lighter phases of the social character are to be learned. Their songs, their dances, and their music, are more or less assimilated to those of their neighbours in Gallicia, in Asturias, and in Castile. The instrumental music, however, where I have heard it, is singularly inharmonious. Dancing is graceful in one province, and stiff and stilted in another. But in songs, all the nations of Spain are more or less pleasing, however much they may fall short of the Greeks.

The festival, however, at which I was present, was conducted with considerable energy and spirit; and the games of which it partially consisted resulted in a very close approximation to broken skulls. Injury, however, was more often the result of accident. These festivals had generally a deep meaning, lost, indeed, through custom, to the perception of their habitual observer, but pregnant with a social philosophy, and with the lore of ancient days. Their daily life still exhibited the imperfect fusion of heathen theism in the precepts of the Christian

religion; and the custom of offering oblations of corn and wine to the spirits of the departed, on the days commemorative of their death, may be traced, in essential characteristics, not simply to the religious records of classical antiquity, but to wider instincts of natural religion, as they generally developed themselves among the early nations of the earth.

I will not weary the reader with a dissertation on so vexed a question as the origin and affinity of a people whose language is supposed by Humboldt to have formed, before the Celtic conquest, the ancient vernacular of Spain, and appears to be taken by Borrow for a dialect of Mantchoo-Tartar! Nor will I ask him to follow me into either of the other Basque provinces, which are too similar to Guipuzcoa to afford a further illustration of life. The Basques lived in isolation, in great degree because they hated all other populations around them; and this sentiment formed the salient principle of their external politics. In point of social condition, they were generally superior to the other races of Spain which it was my lot to visit. They were brave and patriotic; they were often honourable and just; they were generally laborious and indif-

ferent to privation. At the same time, they were conceited and ignorant, supercilious and disdainful, petulant and proud beyond reason. But high qualities overshadow the foibles, or even the vices, of traditionary education. We may admire realities, while we laugh at conceits; and so the visitor to the Basques must be content to combine the good and the evil of life.

But the Basque provinces chiefly engrossed my interest as having been the haunt of a political liberty, sanctioned by immemorial tradition, and now almost unknown to the races of Europe. Beneath the shadow of the Pyrenees and of the Alps, and on the banks of the Lower Danube, exist the few traces of those Political Rights which our ancestors fondly hoped to have been the destined inheritance of all the nations of the Continent in the nineteenth age. For Spain scarcely possesses a settled Constitution; and where government is ever liable to be subverted by the intrigues of the few, it is impossible that any rational freedom can exist. The polity of the Basque provinces formed, in fact, a species of constitutional monarchy, in which the monarch and his court dwelt beyond the frontier. The practical result of this polity, if it did not pro-

duce progress and prosperity, at least yielded peace; and the social and political order which was thus maintained, ensured to a dense population, as I have said, more of the comforts and enjoyments of life than any other Spanish province in which I had travelled.

The maxim which they upheld, of universal nobility, was the foible of their constitution. The reader will not, I hope, regard, as conceived in a spirit adverse to aristocratic institutions, remarks which have had for their object simply to illustrate the absurdity of the political pretensions of the Basques. A nobility co-extensive with a population is subversive of the Idea of Aristocracy. The privileges which these provinces had enjoyed simply implied that their inhabitants were freemen, and not slaves. Their legislative privileges formed in no greater degree an attribute of nobility than those of the holders of the franchise in this country. Their exemption from the Spanish conscription, if it proceeded on the theory of a distinct political existence, implied simply the rights of freemen; and if it coincided with their recognition as an integral part of the Spanish nation, implied

that they were deemed unworthy, like the Christian population of Turkey, to bear arms. Either position, therefore, was inconsistent with an aristocratic character.

The nearest existing example, perhaps, to the privileges of the Basques, is to be found in the modern Constitution of Servia. The suzeraineté of the Porte, and that of the Escurial, proceed alike from the imperfect rule, and consequently imperfect centralisation, of a comparatively modern and dominant race or dynasty. The central power forms, in either, the protector of the local government from external aggression; and the local government, in turn, becomes, in either, its own protector against the central power. If national rights are more clearly defined in Servia, they are more ancient and venerable in the Basque provinces. It is only by a jealous maintenance of traditionary privileges, in respect of their central government, that insignificant nationalities can ensure the durability of their political rights; as it is only by a recognition of the suzeraineté of that central government that they can ensure their political rights, in respect of external aggression. And

so uniform is man's political nature in all periods of the world, that protectorial rights are essential to the security of small communities in this civilized age, as when they were devised in counterpoise to the violence of feudal times.

CHAPTER III

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH IN SPAIN.

As I am about to offer my readers an account of my visit to the most secluded regions of the Eastern Pyrenees, I will not now detain them by throwing into the shape of narrative the observations which I can hardly fail to make on the subject of the state of society in reference to the Church, as it exists in the northern provinces of Spain. These observations, too, have a more general application than illustrations of any other characteristics of that country, inasmuch as the working of the ecclesiastical system does not materially vary in the different provinces of which it is composed. In every other point of view the very term of 'Spain' is a mere nullity. The idea of the existence of such a country may imply, indeed, a geographical truth, but it involves a political illusion. The Peninsula

is an aggregation of nations, and the chief city of each province is the capital of a people. Each population is often as alien from its neighbour in social and political sympathies, and also in moral character, as Germany is alien from Italy, from Sweden, or from France. Nor is Madrid in any greater degree the national capital of Spain than Pamplona, or Valencia, or Saragossa, or Seville.

The stability of these differences, and the fundamental opposition of character, which will ever render them inextinguishable, is allied to the general stability and antiquity which pervade everything in Spain, with the exception of its political constitution. Pamplona itself (where an important ecclesiastical meeting was held at the period of my visiting that part of Spain, which has originated the present chapter) seems to personify this spirit of indestructible antiquity, its huge vicissitudes crowding upon the traveller's soul, and its traditions dimly looming through the vista of two thousand years. It seems still the Pompeiopolis erected by the race of that great Roman chieftain, the brightness of whose memory declined before the splendour of the First Cæsar and Augustus. It shared

all the fortunes and calamities of the Iberian Peninsula, through the innumerable convulsions that succeeded the cessation of the Roman and Carthaginian wars, to those which marked the yet living contests of the House of Bourbon. It was the prize alternately of the Goths and of the Moors—of the Merovingian and of the Carlovingian Franks. It had been demolished first by Childebert, and then by Charlemagne. And yet it stands, with its handsome buildings and its smiling gardens, more than a thousand years afterwards — the evergreen Pamplona! With the records of conquest it still interwove the traditions of a coeval independence, and the distinct nationality of Navarre is marked as strongly at this day as in those of the kings that are chronicled in the pages of Froissart.

The inhabitants of the north-eastern provinces of Spain are, on the whole, industriously disposed. Both the men and the women are a hardworking and handsome race; and though they may not approach to a high national condition, there are, nevertheless, no evidences of the general demoralisation observable in some other parts of Spain. The Church, in truth, is the bane of the social system of Navarre, as of

every other province of the Spanish territory. The women may believe in a certain vitiated kind of Christianity, because they may be more amenable to the influences of enthusiasm, which, I believe, forms an essential element in the inculcation of Roman Catholic dogmas. But the men appear generally to disbelieve the national religion; and for the reason that that religion is discredited by the conduct of its ministers. The priesthood are justly held in derision by the whole male population of the soil, as an organised imposture; and the transition from a condemnation of the representatives and administrators of a religion to a condemnation of the religion itself, is an easy and obvious one with the uneducated classes, who form, of course, the great majority of the population in all the provinces of Spain.

The Spanish women, so far as I had an opportunity of observing them, generally appeared to me, in a certain sense, devout, though degraded, Christians; that is to say, they appeared generally to conform to the principles of the religion imparted to them by the priests. But the chief evidence of ecclesiastical influence upon

their character was to be found in the deplorable superstition which actuated their conduct. The general separation of the community during the labours of the day, gave the priests frequent occasions of intercourse with the women of their flock. The aim of the priesthood on these occasions was generally, I believe, the extortion of money. It was the result of the reduction which had taken place in the provision for the secular clergy, in a degree incompatible with the barest necessities of life, that the priests endeavoured to maintain themselves by illegitimate and dishonest means. They found the male population impervious to their mendacity, and accordingly directed their exertions to the women, on whom they more often succeeded in imposing credulity. They worked, therefore, on their superstitious sentiments by a continual display of fictitious miracles, such as the most ordinary penetration would have detected and exposed, and on their fears both of misfortune in this life and of purgatory in the next. The women thus stood in a moral subjection, more or less complete, to the ministers of religion, both for good and for evil. Such, in a word, was the system by which the

Spanish priesthood was chiefly supported; and such its influence on the female part of the population.

The rest of the community regarded the priesthood, not indeed with scorn, but as a laughing-stock and a joke. Their stories of fresh miracles, whenever uttered in their presence, were received with incredulity and laughter. But the experience of the reception which these stories obtained generally induced the clerical fraternity to reserve them for the gentler sex. I once took my seat at a *table d'hôte*, where (the party consisting of one priest and four or five Spaniards, apparently of the middle class of life) the unfortunate ecclesiastic was subjected to a concentric fire of ridicule from the laics who formed the rest of the party, on account of a miraculous story which he was understood to have lately disseminated. This description, which is true of all that I said in Spain, is, I believe, generally applicable to most of the provinces, greatly as those provinces differ from each other in political characteristics. The men, in fact, appeared to have, for the most part, no religious belief. The national religion appeared, in their eyes, a delusion and a lie; and if this

were the character of the only system recognised by public authority, what deference could they be expected to pay to any other doctrines?

And yet, what a living miracle and marvel is the Roman Catholic Church! It exists, and it has ever existed, upon a basis of vices, of hypocrisies, of depravities, and of falsehoods, which would long ago have ruined and destroyed every other institution under the sun. Here is the most venerable, the most splendid, and the most illustrious institution of Europe transformed into the foulest and most degrading element of moral government. Here is an apostolical fraternity, the traditionary ministers of that institution, who live by their wits! Here is a sacred sacerdotal body, who work miracles to raise the wind! Here are the ministers of a Religion of Morality and Truth, who exert the most evil influence for the most corrupt objects, and sell lies for dollars! Here are at once the ingenious workers of perennial miracles, and the blunderers who cannot (even with so much experience) fabricate a story which will escape the detection of a single uneducated man. O Infidelity! where is the marvel of thine usurpation in Spain? O

Arabia! where is the reproach of thine exiled religion?

Special characteristics attach to the churches of different provinces. At Pamplona there exists a certain tutelary saint, rejoicing in the name San Fermin, who is the traditionary source of continual miracles, and is held up as the posthumous, yet everliving, witness of the supernatural origin of the Faith. It is commonly related that this saint, after suffering martyrdom in the fourth century, was buried in the cathedral, and continued to exert so many miraculous powers underground, that he was finally exhumed by a curious prelate, in the presence of the congregation, who were so delighted with the aroma that arose from the ground, as an invariable incident in that country of the resurrection of a saint, that they at once declared themselves to be translated to Paradise. One cannot, however, but apprehend, that if this resurrection had taken place *within* the period required to complete the process of canonisation, their olfactory nerves might possibly have led them to the opposite conclusion, that they had descended into purgatory.

But, to speak with seriousness, the prospects

before the Spanish Church appeared, during my visit to its institutions, to be deplorable enough. The urgent necessities of the State had seemed to suggest, and the utter profligacy of the priesthood had appeared to sanction, a further sequestration of ecclesiastical revenues. The priests were already in a state of indigence, so far as a legitimate livelihood was concerned, and any further trenching upon their resources seemed calculated to create a general breach, not simply between the Church and the State, but between the soul and the body. The legislation of 1835, which made the first inroad upon ecclesiastical property, endowed the secular clergy, in lieu of their former possessions, with a *culto y clero* tax, the collection of which it vested in the arbitrary will of the alcalde of the village. Local popularity formed the tenure of the alcalde's office; and that dignitary, with the wisdom of this world, deemed his own official existence a far more important matter than the starvation of the priests. Hence the unfortunate ecclesiastic seldom obtained more than a small fraction of the wretched pittance which the munificence of a former Moderado Government had assigned to the ministers of religion. Thus the scheme of a

further spoliation, whether directly or indirectly affecting the secular clergy, was vehemently withstood by that fraternity in Navarre, as not more incompatible with the theory of an ecclesiastical establishment than with the electro-chemical doctrine of life!

An ecclesiastical meeting had been held at Pamplona, in reference to the then contemplated legislation of the State, during my visit to that part of Spain. The aggravations of the clergy found vent in a general denunciation of the Progresista Government, under the influence of self-interest. But the progress of ecclesiastical reform had rendered the bishops altogether the creatures of the State, and the Prelate of Pamplona was not disposed to lend any positive sanction to the dissatisfaction of the clergy. The meeting, therefore, after recording a general malediction against the degeneracy of the times, angrily dispersed among the country villages; and the last expedient of the Spanish clergy developed itself in the institution of secret societies or conspiracies, to which it sought to obtain the formidable sanction of the Jesuits.

Two unfortunate ecclesiastics soon afterwards arrived at Pamplona from a distant part of the

diocese, which they had traversed after the fashion of mediæval pilgrims, to lay their peculiar grievances before the spiritual lord of that city. They were both in a state of very considerable emaciation: over-zealous Catholics, I at first apprehended, sadly given to works of supererogation; for their appearance bespoke the observation of a perennial Lent as constituting their normal condition. I was willing, however, to believe, with the charity of a Christian, that such a work of supererogation was not a work of choice, and that what might bear the character of a questionable virtue proceeded in reality from a most unquestionable necessity.

They had come to Pamplona, as they informed me, to lay before their bishop the desperate straits to which they were reduced by the failure in their cures, first of *ordinary*, and then of *extraordinary* income. By their 'ordinary' income they intended to denote that which the State had nominally provided for their maintenance. By the term 'extraordinary' they indicated all those casual fees and perquisites which they usually extorted from their congregations, as the *ultima ratio sacerdotum*, when legitimate means of livelihood had ceased, through

threats of suspended absolution, of perpetual excommunication in this life, and of a worse fatality in the next.

From the Bishop of Pamplona they obtained very little consolation. The prelate had been the creature of the Moderados, and he began, I dare say, to find his political relations rather ticklish with the Progresistas. He told them, I believe, that 'extraordinary' income, among worthy ministers, ought never to cease: that its cessation implied great stupidity of intellect and a total deficiency in inventive power; and that this deficiency implied again a corresponding incapacity to rule the Church. The prelate concluded by praying Heaven to enlighten their understandings, and finally dismissed them with a formal benediction! They declined, in discomfiture, upon the hotels of the town, and subsequently wandered as far as Tolosa.

They anxiously applied to myself, on learning that I was an Englishman, and having heard of the comparative wealth of the English clergy, for an inductive solution of the problem which they had vainly propounded to the Bishop of Pamplona. "In what manner did the English clergy, on the failure of the 'ordinary' income,

guard against the falling away of the 'extraordinary' income also?" I answered, that the English clergy certainly were not acquainted with any 'extraordinary' income analogous to that in possession of the Spanish clergy. My reply was received, first, with astonishment, and finally with dismay, as indicative of a profound sympathy with the unfortunate clergy of Great Britain, whom they concluded must all be in a state of proximate starvation. When I had at length explained the general character of the English ecclesiastical system, I believe I had unintentionally created converts to my own religious creed under the preaching of Mammon.

I have related these incidents in illustration of the deplorable state of the ecclesiastical system in at least the northern provinces of Spain. The statement may be very unsatisfactory and incomplete, and I regret I have not the space for further discussion of the subject. The description which I have attempted to give of the Bishop of Urgel (Chap. XIV.) implies a very different character from the majority of the Spanish bishops, who are chiefly of a younger generation than that eccentric prelate. I shall also allude, in a chapter on the state of Spain, to the eccle-

siastical question now before the Government of that country on which I here reserve comment. A few years, however, must now, I think, evolve the problem before the Spanish people:—Whether the whole ecclesiastical system of the country shall undergo a comprehensive reconstruction, or be otherwise consigned to a gradual, but total and inevitable extinction?

CHAPTER IV.

VISIT TO THE BÉARNAIS AND TO THE PEOPLE OF BIGORRE.

If I were required to offer a terse description of the Béarnais (a term under which I have included at once the lowlanders and the mountaineers of the eastern district of the Basses Pyrénées), to whose territory I now passed from Spain, I should say that they illustrated an universal idiosyncrasy. Their religious customs, the continuance of their mediæval superstitions, the surviving relics of an elder mythology, their social character, the isolation of their political opinions, in a word, every attribute of their lives, give a complete moral distinctiveness to the romantic district of Béarn and Bigorre. This idiosyncrasy extends even to the pigs! It is the custom of the peasantry to wash these animals in the mountain-streams, by first driving them into the centre

of the stream, and then surprising them with a douche, formed by the collapsing of a wooden ladle held over them by the ministering peasant. The intuitive pigs learn the process, and proceed spontaneously into the streams, where, with their snouts, they throw columns of water over their backs, until they finally attain a perfection in the art, illustrating the philosophical truth of the saying of Cicero: "Ut ad eam doctrinam quam suo quisque studio assecutus esset, adjungeretur usus frequens, qui omnium magistrorum præcepta superaret"!

I was at length fairly in Béarn. I knew that the Béarnais were a very unaccountable and extraordinary people, and determined, accordingly, to assume the functions of what is commonly called an 'inquiring mind.' I knew that their laws, and more especially their customs relating to the distribution of property, were peculiar, and endeavoured to discover some one who could give me a credible and trustworthy account. It was only by way of interpreters that guides were of any use at all in this territory, with the exception of a few intricate *détours* from the recognised route, when these invaluable linguists became unerring topographers.

On the French side of the mountains interpretation was all in all. The Béarnais spoke a *patois* as unintelligible as the Basque language, and, though no doubt a Romance dialect, without affinity, in point of sound, to any tongue in which the beneficent instructors of my early youth had ever indoctrinated me.

In Spain it was quite otherwise. When I could not grammatically understand what I heard, I could usually guess at the meaning, from the frequent similarity of the words uttered to the Latin. When, again, I myself broke down in the provincial dialects, and the intellectual conversationalist beside me had the ill grace to say bluntly that he did not know what language I was talking, I appeased my wounded vanity with greater incivility by telling him that I spoke the Spanish that was talked at Madrid. This, of course, settled the matter at once, and made him shrink into an appalling conviction of his own miserable provincialism! But among the Béarnais, the language afforded no means either of submitting to offence or of imposing the publicanical retribution of offending in turn.

One word on the Béarnais language. It is essentially a mediæval Romance tongue. I use

the term 'tongue,' because the popular distinction between a 'patois' and a 'language' is anything but a philosophical one; and it would be hard to say where, even in this popular view, the line of demarcation is to be drawn. If a given system of mental communication is to be called a 'patois,' because it is defective, Welsh must certainly be included in that designation. Yet every son of Cymri would be exasperated by such a lingual heresy; and a cool, reflecting, philosophical philologist would, I believe, hold his conduct to be morally justifiable.

Béarnais is, of course, principally a compound of Latin and Teutonic, like the other languages of the West; and there may very possibly be more admixture of Arabic than among more northerly dialects. But, unlike modern French, modern Castilian, and modern everything else that is popularly termed civilised, it is not a homogeneous compound. Many Béarnais sentences strikingly remind one of the Norman of our early law-books. It thus presents a harsh and jarring jumble of the tongues of different conquering nations, that, at one time or other, have swept over the soil; reminding one of Bolingbroke's saying (which I quote from me-

mory), "that the earth is a vast surface, on which nations have jostled one another about from the beginning of time."

The Béarnais, then, irrespectively of dialectic differences, is substantially what the Langue d'oil once was. Where the more northerly language has advanced, and become modernised into what we now term French diction, the Béarnais has remained stationary. But while the common theory, which would pronounce this tongue a patois, is not unintelligible, it does not appear to me just to assert such an inferiority in a tongue at least as ancient as the central language—and in fact, so far as concerns its present condition, by much more so—on the mere ground that the latter may be more copious, or may be exalted above the other, through the political centralisation of the state. It is obvious, indeed, that the popular distinction rests simply on this last consideration. The Béarnais and other such tongues are substantially what the mediæval Romance languages formerly were. No one disputes the title of these tongues to the character of languages. How, then, can it be disputed now? Certainly not for intrinsic characteristics.

Yet even the argument of political centralis-

ation seems untenable. The Gallician and the Portuguese were once essentially identical. I believe that even now they differ very slightly. Supposing, then, Spain, inclusive of Gallicia, politically united, and Portugal independent, at the period of their identity, the very same tongue would be at once a language and a patois.*

I resolved, then, to learn all that I could of the Béarnais language. My first attempt was very unsuccessful. I passed an old ruined tower, built on a knoll, guarding the ravine on which it stood, and apparently the work of the Plan-

* The theory that the existence of a grammar is to form the condition of a language does not seem to me tenable. Languages have held to be languages long before they were grammaticised. It requires, therefore, to be shown that a provincial tongue is incapable of being grammaticised, before such a theory could command even a *primâ facie* respect. Nor can any presumption of impossibility be deduced from the absence of such a grammar among a people whose instruction would be unlikely to direct their energies to any species of mental analysis. And even if the attempt had been made, so great is the latitude allowed to the *grammatical principle*—so weak in all languages the force of general rules—that I think any tongue must be singularly incoherent which should be found incapable of reduction to certain principles of grammar.

tagenets. Beside it was an old Béarnais woman (nearly coeval with the ruin), gathering up sticks or stones, and generally seeking what she might devour. I asked her in French the legend of the place, intending to believe it, if not violently opposed to all internal probability. She answered me in Béarnais with, very likely, a begging imposition. Neither understood the other; and there was as complete a confusion of tongues before the tower as before the tower of Babel!

Soon afterwards I observed another woman making incantations over some vegetable productions, which proved to be plants of wild mint, near her dwelling. She was singing some rhythmical song; and as her acquaintance with poetry was not apparently extensive, she sang the same song over and over again. Meanwhile, she was making an oblation of bread and salt, as it seemed, to gain the favour of some invisible divinity. On inquiring through my interpreter, she told me that she had got a sick child in the cottage. This ample explanation, as she appeared to think it, did not satisfy my curiosity. In compassion to the ignorance of a matter-of-fact infidel from the North, I was then

initiated into the mysteries of Béarnaical superstition. The child was beyond human aid, but superhuman properties of recovery resided in the wild mint. The sprig of mint, in fact, was a divinity who, on the performance of these oblations and incantations repeated a certain number of times, restored the child to health. A most self-denying divinity he was; for he worked cures at the expense of his own at once divine and vegetable nature. As soon as the child recovered, the plant withered away. Such, in a novel mythology, was the metempsychosis of the Spirit of Health!

Here was Béarnaism in full force — pure, moral idiosyncrasy — the first-fruits of my assumption of an 'inquiring mind'! I had now crossed the Vallée d'Ossau, in which little of real Béarnaism any longer existed. The main road communicating between Pau and Eaux Bonnes passes up this valley; and the proximity of these baths has totally changed the character of the villagers under the immediate influence of their visitors: In fact, if you had neither a map, a guide, nor the means of inquiring the road leading to the baths, it would simply be necessary to turn physiognomist; and in pro-

portion as simplicity and benignity of character might become replaced by knavishness of expression, you would feel confident that you were *en route* for the Pyrenean Baths. If you relapsed again into a village of simple-minded inhabitants, representing the character of their forefathers, you would be assured that you were altogether out of your road. If, again, you suddenly returned, after a long journey, into the world of rogues and cheats, and found that you had been grievously imposed on in the most outrageous manner, you would console exhausted nature and repenting confidence with the conviction that you were in immediate proximity to a *table d'hôte!*

At Laruns, according to the concurrent evidence of geography and physiognomy, the traveller finds himself near Eaux Bonnes. Hence roads, or bridle-paths, diverge in all directions; some leading to the different baths, and some traversing the wild solitudes, inhabited only by the shepherd, intervening between valley and valley. The high road to the eastward, however, in this instance, enables the traveller to visit Betharam, St. Pé, and Lourdes. It was in one of my divergences from this track, after

leaving the Vallée d'Ossau, and when in the old county of Bigorre, that I found a secluded village all alive with enthusiasm in consequence of the celebration of a marriage then about to take place.

The ceremony was a burlesque upon itself. It inverted, moreover, every relation recognised among other populations. The first part of the ceremony, which I happened to see, consisted in the bride being pompously marshalled through the street in search of the bridegroom. Whether it was customary among the bachelors of the chivalrous land of Béarn that the initiative in the proposals, as well as in the actual solemnisation, of marriage, should proceed from the ladies of the community, I am not aware. But at all events, when the proposals had been once made, the ratifications exchanged by the respective parents (which in Béarn formed part of the ordinary routine), and the 'solemnisation,' or rather the 'hilarisation,' was about to take place, the bridegroom had no notion whatever of seeking the bride.

The procession, consisting of the bride and her companions, at length came to a halt at a short distance from a house where the bride-

groom's family resided. At this point, an apparently reconnoitring party was detached from the main force, and sent (as it afterwards appeared) to hold a parley with the father of the bridegroom, who was viewed apparently in the light of the Governor of the Castle. The worthy parent in due time appeared; and it seemed as though negotiations were going on for the "extradition" of the bridegroom. I pitied the poor devil of a bridegroom from the bottom of my heart; for he appeared to have arrived at the magnanimous resolution of resisting to the last extremity, before he consented to surrender. Meanwhile everything hung upon the question of his abduction by the party sent forward by the determined and chivalrous bride.

An unfortunate lamb, dressed out for the occasion with ornamental ribands, was now conducted to a position in front of the advance party; and as the friends of the invisible bridegroom retired into the house when the procession began to advance, it seemed for the moment that the lamb was about to assume the command of a storming division. At length, however, the wretched bridegroom surrendered at discretion; and the party of the bride commenced

nuptial songs, which the barbarous ear of a wanderer of the North supposed to be howls, and to signify the final dismay and discomfiture of the bridegroom. They were intended, however, to be joyous. Every relation, as I said just now, is inverted in Béarn; and the dirges which are sung by the Béarnais in funeral processions are no more dirges than the Threnodia Augustalis. The bridal party then entered, and met the party of the bridegroom (who, poor man, was beaming with smiles!)—various productions of the earth, as emblems of future prosperity, were singularly thrown by the bystanders into the open windows; a rustic banquet succeeded within-doors; the bride bowed to those who congregated without; and the solemn nuptial songs recommenced—the apotheosis of her maiden existence!

Such was a marriage among the Béarnais. Everything, I was told, was perfectly regular. The conduct of the bridegroom was in no way different from that of every other automaton who entered into connubial felicity in Béarn. I could gain no other explanation of the forms in which it was customary for him and his bride to acquiesce, than the assurance that such had

been the immemorial custom of the people—an answer seeming to imply that no further question need be asked for the satisfaction of private curiosity, nor any doubts of its wisdom be entertained in the face of its sanction by conservative tradition.

I afterwards diverged from the track which I had chosen, to visit the lonely shrine of some mountainous saint with an eccentric name, and a yet more mythical tradition. The saint, it appeared, was the *genius loci* in relation to a small chapel, in a solitude midway between the marriage-scene and the village of Luz. This was his anniversary, on which it was customary for the whole neighbouring population to do honour to his memory by assembling to divine service in the chapel, which, by the theory of the church, was his sinecure! The wedding was supposed to have derived greater solemnity, or in other words 'a peculiar sanction,' from its celebration on the anniversary of the proximate saint. The religious fête which I afterwards witnessed in the Republic of Andorre, and which I shall afterwards describe, was very different from that to which I now bent my steps. The Béar-

nais had no notion of rivalling the Andorrans in the art of keeping up a religious festival "with spirit."

As we approached the chapel—far from human habitations—we found that the peasantry of Bigorre had congregated thither to meet the peasantry of Béarn. This little chapel (the name of which I totally forget) was near the frontier of ancient Bigorre, a district now nearly co-extensive with the department of the Hautes Pyrénées. I think I may state as a general truth, that, amid wide dissimilarities in civil and social characteristics, there was something like an uniformity in the religious forms of the peasantry on the French side of the Pyrenees. It was common to nearly all those races to celebrate the memory of their chosen saints, by annually repairing to chapels dedicated to their memory. Not seldom some epoch or episode in the life of the Virgin was the subject of this manifestation of superstitious but simple piety.

I understood that the Béarnais attached peculiar spiritual prerogatives (and it seemed that they did so in a greater degree than any other neighbouring race) to the honoured saint on the

anniversary which celebrated his memory. Yet, in all this, there was more of primitive than of priestly superstition,—there was scarcely anything, in truth, of a degrading priestcraft in the character of the Béarnais. Their mythology was less the mythology of priestcraft than the peopling of a religious fairyland.

Some time afterwards, when in Ariège, I singularly fell in with one of the few Béarnais shepherds who had ever been transported from their native mountains. This was near Ax; and as he was living in equal solitude among the mountains of Ariège with those whom he had left behind him in Béarn, his superstitious character had not suffered by the transplantation. He had then returned from a festival, in a neighbouring valley, similar to that which I have described as having taken place on the frontiers of Béarn and Bigorre. The ceremony, as I reached his dwelling in the company of my guide, was just concluded; the day, in evangelic language, was far spent; and there was no alternative but that of seeking the shelter afforded by the shepherd's cabin, until the moon rose later in the evening (which would enable me to push on to Ax before midnight), or of meanwhile bivouacking,

benighted, on the mountains. My choice of the former was a choice not comparative but positive; nor would I readily have missed the conversation which my guide enabled me to maintain with the Béarnais shepherd of the mountains. As it related to the superstitions of his race, I insert it here.

As we reached the shepherd's cottage (for this was worthier of the name of cottage than many of the mountain dwellings), and as the twilight fell on the landscape, fires became visible on the mountain heights. They had been lit by the peasantry on their return homewards in commemoration of the religious festival, which, it seemed to imply, was to be ranked as something intervening between Christianity and Zoroastrianism! The shepherd led the way, and welcomed us to his humble dwelling. He explained, in his simple manner, the view entertained by the peasantry of the festival, which bears out the description I have attempted to offer of it. But fêting a saint was a hungry as well as a pious work; and we now looked forward to being fêted in turn.

I interrogated the shepherd on the subject of the harvest, and found that I had touched

the spring of his national superstitions. The harvest, he said, was in the hands of the fairies.

I asked him to explain.

He expressed a simple wonder that any one should not know that all the fruits of the earth were showered down by them. Wherever their light and airy tread might pass, there plenty grew; where they did not tread, there there was no kindliness in Nature.

He explained that the fairies were seen by the mountaineers dancing on the moonlight sward, descending from the high lands to the plain, and scattering plenty on their way.

I asked if he had seen these fairies himself.

"Yes," he replied, "I have often seen them; and so have all who live in the mountains." He went on to explain that the fairies came into the dwellings of the shepherds, when they brought good or ill fortune, according to the symbols in their hands, But there was an evil spirit, termed the 'black giant,' transcending the fairies in their power, and scattering desolation over the soil. He had not seen the black giant; but his belief in the whole of this mediæval mythology was simple and sincere as that of the other mountaineers, and he concluded

his story smiling at the hard scepticism of the North.

This theory of the evil spirit and the fairies, so happily contrived as to adjust itself to any event — inasmuch as the evil spirit was not often seen, and could always be supposed to have been present, in order to save the consistency of the fairies — reminded me of that happy doctrine of conflicting bumps, which serves so opportunely to extricate the puzzled disciple of phrenology. The shepherd, however, was in a mythological mood, and I took pains to draw him out into a confession of all the Aves, Paters, and Credos of Fairyland.

I cannot attempt to recount all I learnt on this and other occasions from the Béarnais shepherds. They were stored in all the vegetable lore of the middle ages! They believed not simply in the physical, but in the moral agency of the products of the soil. One class of plants protected them against the influence of evil spirits, of whom there were many other than the great agrarian depredator aforesaid. What an irresistible fortification for a poor vicar subsisting wholly upon small tithes! They believed in the magic power of fountains and crystal streams;

and they drew auguries from the flights of birds. It would be vain, however, and pedantic, to continue the narration of this simple and ancient belief, unless I were prepared to give it some kind of classification, and develope its relation to the general character of mediæval Romance. All that I have now stated, I learnt from several concurrent sources. But there is far more to be deduced by those who would treat at length of the Superstitions of the Pyrenees,—a subject replete with philosophy, and intimately interwoven with the progress and civilisation of Europe.

* * * * *

Many of the elements of the Béarnais character seemed strikingly inconsistent with each other. There was among them a vast deal of civility, of politeness, and of good taste. There was not less of primitive and untutored simplicity. There was much of envy and open irascibility, mixed up with an inborn dissimulation. But their love of liberty, when we descend from superstitious to practical thought, was perhaps their leading characteristic; and as that liberty was actually possessed by them in former times, in a degree beyond their neighbours, so the desire for it is

now pre-eminent among them. In this respect we see the political distinctions of gone ages shadowed forth in the social peculiarities which have survived them.

It was from some of the better educated among them that I gained my information (which written testimony afterwards confirmed) on the existing peculiarities of the laws of property among the Béarnais. In their secluded mountains they safely rode out the storm of Reformation and Revolution in Central France. In one respect, however, their system anticipated that brought about elsewhere by the Revolution —for they had *originally* acquiesced, up to a certain point, in the division of property. Thus there are few large landlords, and few labourers, among the Béarnais. But a *continuous* division, though nominally in force by the modern French law, is seldom observable at this day in practice. Nearly every family guards the rights originally attached to primogeniture; and younger sons (with how unexampled a generosity!) more often surrender their legal rights to conservative traditions. They content themselves with scanty portions until they can meet with heiresses, and so there is no end of match-making in Béarn. Here

is Conservatism resting upon an adequate supply of heiresses; and if heiresses should fail, Conservatism must fail also! Such are the contingencies on which hang the territorial prospects and the political principles of Béarn.

CHAPTER V.

VISIT TO THE PYRENEAN BATHS.

I MUST ask the reader to follow me, through one chapter at least, into a very different scene. I would now pass from the solitude, the simplicity, perhaps the barbarism, of the unfrequented haunts of the Western Pyrenees, into the luxury and civilisation of the French watering-places. These changes constitute, in fact, the soul of travel. The earnest and enterprising traveller fancies, indeed, for the while, that he will retain to his journey's end his original indifference to the artificial luxuries of the French Baths; much as the easy and effeminate tourist thinks that their hotels and tables d'hôte are attractions superior to the grandest scenes of Nature and the wildest haunts of Man. But, in truth, in these alternations—in these changes from sombre forests and the gloom of a primæval

antiquity to the light of modern days and the artifices of social life—there is a marvellous charm. Above all, there is the contrast plainly in the traveller's view, between what our ancestors may once have been, and what we now are. Before him is the result of the progressive social divergence between those who, a thousand years ago, sought the plains, and those who sought the mountains for their dwelling-place. He finds the latter in their primitive simplicity, and he sees the former in the zenith of civilisation. Yet these were once families of man identical in their thoughts, their manners, and their modes of life.

So much, then, my reader may say, and the venerable illusion of Cowper, that "Man made the Town, but God made the Country!" These varieties in travel, indeed, were what Dr. Johnson would have called "bursts of light and involutions of darkness." But I would venture to suggest that the poet may, after all, have been in the right—so far, at least, as the Pyrenees are concerned. For I have my doubts whether "the bursts of light" did not consist in my visit to the mountains, and the "involutions of darkness" in my return to the

baths. There was, at least, all that was magnificent and natural in the one, and all that was tinsel and factitious in the other.

I am, however, like my fellow-countrymen, a human being, and by no means an abstract entity. I am not indifferent to the merits of a good *table d'hôte*. I am a connoisseur in dishes and in wine. I hold cookery to be a sublime science. I fear that it has not (as Archbishop Sumner says of Geology,) "yet found its Newton;" but I believe it capable of as incalculable a development as the science of Political Economy itself. But while I am fond of all these things, I have found in a primitive simplicity greater and more lasting pleasures.

I found myself at Pau—once the capital of the Béarnais—the birthplace of Henri Quatre, the most illustrious of the Capetian Monarchs—the cradle of the House of Bourbon. I can devote, however, but as few lines as other writers have devoted pages to its celebrity. It is now the head-quarters of the tourist in the Western Pyrenees, and the central watering-place to which the loungers at the different mountain-baths converge, as winter drives them from the high land of the Pyrenees. In summer it is

nearly deserted; in winter it is the pleasing abode of indolence and scandal. Its climate, as every one knows, is far milder and more settled than that of Montpellier. Its famous Château is more interesting from its historical traditions than curious from its tangible attractions. The distant view is picturesque, and the Vin de Jurançon is excellent. These are the qualifications of Pau.

We left Pau, where I gladly found my heavy luggage, that had travelled from Sebastian by Bayonne for the luxurious Pyrenean Baths, to see what sort of Parisian Civilisation had been manufactured in the mountains, and how Art had triumphed over the hostility of Nature. At a distance of some five-and-twenty miles from this place are the Eaux Bonnes and the Eaux Chaudes,—the former being apparently so termed because they are preternaturally disagreeable, and the latter because they are singularly cool. At Laruns, rather more than twenty miles from Pau, the roads diverge, one of these leading to Eaux Bonnes, the other to its rival. We chose the former, and after performing interminable gyrations in the ascent of a nearly vertical mountain, reached Eaux Bonnes. What a marvellous

spot is this for civilised and luxurious man to have made his abode! It is a village of splendid hotels built in the cleft of a mountain. Amid the roar of the forest and the home of the eagle are excellent dinners, pretty bonnets, and prettier faces. Yet what a non-natural existence—what a mockery of Nature—is life at Eaux Bonnes! There every one dressed as he would have dressed in Paris. The business of the morning consisted in drinking the mineral waters. The shocking effluvia pervading the approach to these waters, and suggesting the proximity of myriads of extravagantly rotten eggs, imbued me with the involuntary conviction that, not only had Paris migrated to the mountains, but that Mr. Cantelo himself had set up a chicken-incubator in the Pyrenees, and was, perhaps, hatching eaglets by the thousand. Yet these waters were drunk to an extent beyond credibility, and with an avidity beyond parallel.

But the *table d'hôte*—like dinners everywhere else—was the epoch of the day. Thither the ladies repaired, either from the baths or from an afternoon parade along a terrace of green sward which had been carved out of the rock; and thither the gentlemen from a mountain

stroll, or from the sport of real or suppositious izard-shooting, with an undeviating punctuality which implied that dinner was the best sport of all. The dinner concluded, the parade recommenced, until evening hushed Eaux Bonnes into a silence, to be dissipated again, with the returning day, by the sweet vicissitude of the mineral waters and the parade!

Eaux Chaudes was more congenial to my temperament than Eaux Bonnes. It had one comfortable hotel, and another somewhat less luxurious. These hotels, a few cottages, and the baths, constituted Eaux Chaudes. Here there was some approach to a union of luxury and retirement. Here, at least, one could walk or ride in a country costume without attracting the supercilious stare of passers-by. To any tourists enjoying but indifferent health, unequal to the fatigues of a campaign in the mountains, yet fond of retirement and of natural beauty, and shunning false brilliancy, such as that of Eaux Bonnes, I recommend this little watering-place. He will there find some little French and some little English society, and either of the most pleasant kind.

We soon left Eaux Chaudes, to visit once

more the Spanish frontier and the Pic du Midi d'Ossau, a giant mountain rising from the head of the beautiful valley of Ossau, and midway between Eaux Chaudes and the Arragonese territory. The carriage-road extends as far as Gabas, a hamlet at the foot of the mountain. There, as it would seem, the triumphs of civilisation end; and immediate proximity to the Spanish soil is everywhere marked by the absence of roads.

The splendid highways which the energies of the French Government have constructed among the baths of the Pyrenees, by the blasting of the rock, strikingly illustrate the contrast between their policy and that of Madrid. These roads, conducting the travellers to enormous heights, are smooth and gentle in their ascent, and extend like galleries of Art among the wild solitudes of Nature, in the region of the French watering-places. But as we approach the frontier, all these triumphs of engineering skill are replaced by mule-tracks, such as those which France might have possessed in the Carlovingian age.

I did not reach the summit of this Pic. Travellers, indeed, are generally content to halt at

the Plateaux des Bioux Artiques, surrounded by a grand amphitheatre of mountains, and about half way from Gabas to the summit. They are told in guide-books and elsewhere that the view from the plateau will alone repay a journey from England, but there is an obvious fallacy in such an assertion. If you either reach the summit of such a mountain, or are content to remain at the base, you gain a fair conception of its vast height. Half-way up, on the contrary, you totally lose this conception, in which all the grandeur exists; because, in such mountains as the Pyrenees, you cannot see the ground below you, and consequently cannot appreciate the height at which you stand. The further, therefore, you ascend, the less imposing the Pic appears, until you reach a point higher than the surrounding peaks. Then, indeed, the mountain majesty stands unveiled, and around you on every side is a sea of everlasting rock, whose varied and snow-capped ridges, like the surf of immutable waves, extend as the colossal and eternal imagery of the transient tumult of Ocean, fixed there, thousands of years ago, by a final and gigantic dislocation of Nature.

Between the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Appe-

nines, the Atlas, the Mysian Olympus, and the Sierra Nevada, who shall decide? I have seen all these, with the exception of the Appenines; and the Appenines, too, have been so well described to me that I begin to think I have seen them also. But between the Pyrenees and the Alps there exists the widest contrast that two long ranges of mountains, each towering ten thousand feet above the level of the sea, and in latitudes not very dissimilar, could possibly exhibit. The cause of all this difference rests in a difference of climate. The proximity of the Atlantic is probably the chief cause of the mildness and luxuriance of the former range. If the Alps have more grandeur, from the extent of their glaciers and their perennial snow, the Pyrenees have infinitely more beauty, variety, and luxuriance. But I do not see that glaciers are themselves necessary attributes of the sublime; for it is simply their height that invests them with more grandeur than any other fields of ice. Nor is the luxuriance of the Pyrenees developed in those sombre forests of fir, which in the Alps frequently clothe the intervening space between the valley and the unchanging snow. In the Pyrenean woods there is every contrast of foliage

and of hue. The oak and the beech, and twenty other trees that shed their leaves in autumn, intermingle with the fir, and yield, as the season advances, every variety of tint that Vegetation can conceive. The intense verdure of the valleys is at least equal to those of Switzerland; and where the trees here and there fail the mountain summits, a humbler vegetation sheds its mosses, its leaves of fern, and its blades of grass, in every hue. And all this verdure is diversified with the barest rock, and surmounted with peaks of snow.

Thus the Pyrenees are as like the Appenines as they are unlike the Alps, and the character of either range is born of a more genial Nature. But of all the mountain ranges I have seen, that of the Atlas appears the most magnificent from off the Mauritanian shore of the Mediterranean Sea. There is something in the wild majesty of Africa with which Europe does not vie. The Sierra Nevada have much of the snowy ranges of the Alps, without their extreme magnificence, and still more without the beauty of the Pyrenees. The Mysian Olympus displays, perhaps, more beauty than any single peak of the Pyrenees; while the latter exhibit the endless

variety of nearly three hundred miles between the Gulf of Rosas and the Ocean.

Of all the fictions of grandeur and beauty that I have seen, the Rhine is the most signal. It has, indeed, a marvellous lightness and variety —the feeble image of that Thracian Bosporus, which exceeds all other waters of Europe in the beauty and variety of its banks. Almost every man visits the Rhine; scarcely any man visits the Danube. And yet the Danube, though sombre not seldom in its aspect, has a grandeur to which the Rhine cannot approach, and a legendary glory which it cannot surpass. There is not a single valley of the Pyrenees which, if Nature had bestowed on it a river, would not infinitely surpass the finest scenery of the Rhine. But I professed to describe the Pyrenees, and I have wandered over Africa, Europe, and Asia.

From Eaux Chaudes, the route to the Baths of Panticosa passes by way of the Pic du Midi d'Ossau. Just beyond the Pic you enter the Arragonese territory; and the harpies of old, under the very unpoetical metamorphosis of Douaniers, there assuredly descend upon you with all their ancient vigour and pertinacity. These baths, though

eight thousand feet above the sea-level, seem to stand in a hollow valley. The ascent from the beautiful Vallée de Broto, itself of no inconsiderable altitude, occupies two hours; and the famous Pauticosan Baths are encompassed by mountains of granite, which form an amphitheatre, enclosing a dark and gloomy lake, by the side of which arise the dwellings which constitute, in fact, 'the Baths.' From hence you return into France by way of Cauterets; or if you please, can take the carriage-road to the north; or, thirdly, the bridle-path from Eaux Bonnes to Argelez.

The society of the different nations that send their representatives to these baths form, perhaps, the only element of rational curiosity which they possess. Between the manners of the English, the French, and the Spanish ladies, the contrast certainly is wide enough. The Spanish ladies seem to excite the astonishment of all other travellers; and all other travellers excite the astonishment of the Spanish ladies at the baths. These ladies appear to do nothing; they have no energy for the parades of Eaux Bonnes. They rise late, they bathe, they sleep, they dine, and

they sleep again; and the day returns to them with its wonted monotony. There is in their every air a luxurious indolence, which reminds one of the ladies of Georgia and of sweet Circassia, at Constantinople, till one begins to doubt, with the Mussulman creed, whether the investiture of the fair sex with the property of souls is not, after all, a venerable illusion of Western Europe. On this head, however, I would presume to express no opinion, between the general conviction of Europe and the general conviction of Asia. But I have a high respect for the opinion of so vast a community as Mahometanism, on a great psychological question such as this, and when viewed as an *à priori* consideration. I hope, however, that no fair reader of these pages will regard the present observations as strictly applicable to any others than the Spanish visitors of the Pyrenean Baths. I earnestly believe, with my Lord Chesterfield, that women shed that light over the social universe which the constellations diffuse in the firmament above—a conviction, indeed, in no way incompatible with the truth of the Mahometan position.

The Spanish Pyrenees are certainly far grander than the French. Between the two

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territories, indeed, there is a marvellous difference in the largesses of Nature—a difference well-nigh inverted by the civilising energy of man—and the very soil of Spain would seem fabulous in France. Sighing once more over a land, the most splendid and luxuriant in the design of the Creator, and yet the poorest and most miserable in the hands of man, we repassed the eternal boundaries of the Peninsula. Through mountain pathways such as these were poured forth, in successive ages of the world, the armies equipped by the Carthaginian and the Arabian power, for the subversion of the prowess of republican Rome, or of the Austrasian successors of the Cæsars. Through the defiles and the gorges of mountains now marked by the struggles of the bandit and the skirmishes of the smuggler, there once passed, under the Punic or the Saracenic standard, the armed hosts that marched to triumph such as that of Cannæ, or to desolation such as that of Poictiers. Now all is changed; and the beneficence of Time sheds peace and prosperity upon lands that once bowed beneath the tyranny of Man. The later contests of ambition are there gone by; and to the bouquetin, to the izard, and to the eagle, are

once more surrendered those wild and deserted scenes that glowed with the illustrious chivalry of ancient days!

The French frontier between Pauticosa and Cauterets is scarcely less beautiful; and after five or six hours we reached the Pont d'Espagne. Here the road diverges; the one path leading to Cauterets, the other to the Lac de Gaube. We chose the latter, and visited the lake, one of the largest in this part of Europe, nearly six thousand feet above the Mediterranean, and encompassed by snow-capped mountains. But beyond comparison of other scenes, that commanded by the Pass of Marcasaow, at the boundary of the two countries, and midway between Pauticosa and the Pont d'Espagne, is the most magnificent. Behind us, to the southward, were successive ranges of snow-clad mountains, rising one above the other like the Sierra Nevada: before us, in France, extended forests of the darkest fir, alternating with spiral rocks; and either equalling the grandeur and desolation of the Alps. As we approached the Pont, the wildness became beauty; and a long succession of cascades marked the defile which leads to Cauterets.

We reached Cauterets — another street of hotels — and we left it. Hence, by diverging from our direct route to Luz, we descended the golden valley of Argelez, and visited Pierrefitte, whose ancient church is said to have been standing in the Carlovingian age, and is a relic of early ecclesiastical architecture truly worthy of attention. Thence we proceeded to Lourdes, visited its ancient castle, associated with the chivalrous courage of those who followed the standard of the House of Plantagenet. Finally, we reached Luz, and made that place our head-quarters, through its facilities for the accomplishment of those gentle expeditions usually undertaken by visitors to the Baths of the Pyrenees. Hence we proceeded to Gavarnie, to its famous Cirque, or natural amphitheatre of rocks, to Mont Perdu, to the Vignemale, and to the Brêche de Roland. We also saw, of course, St. Sauveur, a little watering-place near Luz. We left Luz for Barèges, and the Pic du Midi de Bigorre, which I did not ascend.

Barèges is a singular place. It stands at a greater elevation than any other of the French Baths. It is sought by the most seriously invalided of the Pyrenean visitors, in consequence

of the greater strength of its mineral waters; and it is quite melancholy to enter the town and see nothing but paralysis around you. The importance attached to its waters induces a few of its invalided visitors to remain at Barèges throughout the winter; but so advantageous, meanwhile, is the shelter afforded by this town in winter to the denizens of the higher mountains, that, on a rough estimate of the population of the place being taken at the close of the year, the bears, I believe, are not unfrequently found to be in the ascendant!

Hence we proceeded to Bagnères en Bigorre, in proximity to which the race of Cagots now attracted my attention. I shall attempt, in the following chapter, to offer a description of them, so far as they independently exist; and to take in view the different theories of their origin, with a view of elucidating the cause of their mediæval privations.

CHAPTER VI.

VISIT TO THE CAGOTS, WITH AN INQUIRY INTO THE DIFFERENT THEORIES OF THEIR ORIGIN.

I NOW proceeded to visit the remnants of the race of Cagots, many of whom are scattered among the villages around Bagnères-en Bigorre. I know of few objects of greater interest, among the social characteristics of the border-lands of Spain and France, than this people. Their history and their origin have been involved in deep uncertainty; and even at this day it is only with great caution that we can attempt to offer a satisfactory theory of their present existence. They are a race who have been proscribed, in great degree, both by State and Church—who have been debarred the privileges enjoyed by other Christians at once under civil and ecclesiastical enactments; and have been discredited by the social prejudices of their neighbours. They long

lived in the most secluded valleys of the Pyrenees, apart from the communion and society of the surrounding inhabitants; and were subjected, there can be no doubt, to the double slur of leprosy and heresy. The problem, then, has not unnaturally engrossed and perplexed attention—through what causes were these proscribed and isolated fragments of the human race, distinct in nearly every characteristic from their neighbours, thus established in the heart of the Pyrenean mountains?

I will first endeavour to state my impression of those little colonies of Cagots which I visited; and will afterwards attempt to solve the historical question which their existence at this day presents. The Cagots are thus far connected with the other proscribed races of these frontier lands, that they have been subjected to common privations, and at the hands of a common ecclesiastical power, with those other races. From some of these they are of distinct, and with some, again, of cognate, origin.

These races, according to their principal divisions, are, the Colliberts of Bas Poictou, the Vaquéros of Asturias, the Chuetas of Mayorga, and the Marans of Auvergne. I shall have occasion

to speak of some of these races, in illustration of the question of the origin of the Cagots. There are several other minor divisions. Those subdivisions, however, are chiefly nominal. The Agotes, for example, who still live in the Vallée de Bastan, and therefore within the province of Navarre, are simply a branch of the Cagots.

I found the condition of the Cagot families whom I visited very different from that of their ancestors. They were not the victims of the social isolation and religious intolerance of the Cagots of the middle ages. The pure and fastidious dogmas of mediæval Romanism had been replaced by the sad latitudinarianism of the nineteenth century; and this result had produced a corresponding influence on the proscribed people. They had, I believe, more often intermarried with the surrounding races; and this circumstance has, no doubt, done much to wear away their distinctive physical character. Leprosy (if, which I am disposed to doubt, it ever existed among them) had, at least, long since passed away; nor were the Cagots in the region of Bagnères, with very few exceptions, afflicted with goître. The Agotes, however, of the Vallée de Bastan, are said to be commonly subjected to

the latter malady. This, however, forms no distinctive characteristic; nor am I aware that it was ever regarded as a development of leprosy. It is at least common to nearly all the mountainous regions of Europe.

I went first to Montgaillard and then to Campan—villages not far distant from Bagnères, and the traditionary settlements of the Cagots. At Montgaillard, traces of the harsh ecclesiastical discipline to which they were subjected were still visible. The Cagots had been invariably denied the rights of worship and of sepulture with other Christians. A distinct portion of the churchyard had been assigned to them; and here, wherever certain families could be still recognised as distinctively Cagots, they were still interred. This race, although not forbidden from attending at the services of the Church, were formerly separated from the rest of the congregation, and were compelled to enter the building by a side-door. The door, a small and insignificant entrance, is placed beneath the belfry; and in the inner porch, into which it opens, is still a stone receptacle for holy water. This circumstance serves to shed some light on the religious position of the Cagots; for there ap-

pears to be little doubt that, while they were thus admitted to the benefit of the holy water, they were generally excluded from the reception of the sacraments.

The door in question, however, is now replaced by stonework: no ingress through this doorway is now sought by the Cagot race; and that emblem of mediæval tyranny is a thing gone by. The Cagots, wherever they survive as a distinct race, mingle with the rest of the congregation. Hence it may be assumed that the perpetuation of their distinct burial-ground arises simply from a wish for the maintenance of an ancient tradition, which, although associated with all that is degrading in former times, has become venerable from sheer antiquity.

At Campan, the arrangements of the church and cemetery were similar to those which I have mentioned as existing at Montgaillard. There were the same side-door, the same *bénitier*, the same distinct burial-ground.

The frequent intermarriages which had taken place during the last fifty years between the Cagots and the people of Bigorre, rendered the recognition of characteristics among the population of either of these places, corresponding to

the historic characteristics of the Cagots, very improbable. There were some few, indeed, of an elder generation who were pointed out to me as pure Cagots. The uncertainty of tradition, in places such as these, could in itself inspire little confidence in such an assertion, which might possibly have been grounded on the fact that those individuals were more miserable in appearance than their neighbours. The generally received tradition, however, that these foreign marriages had been uncommon until the present century, imparted some show of reasoning to the assertion. They may, therefore, be perhaps regarded as the nearest approximation to representatives of the ancient and proscribed race that is now to be discovered in the Pyrenees.

Miserable indeed (if these individuals really represented the misfortunes and calamities attaching to the Cagot race) were the memorials they formed of the traditionary cruelty of the Ecclesiastical and the Civil Power. They seemed as though they groaned under the superincumbent moral weight of a persecution of a thousand years. They were low in stature, not perhaps grossly deformed in person, but their figures, nevertheless, unlike other human beings; weak

and tottering (though not apparently of great age), as if their joints had been lately loosened under the kindly influence of the Inquisition. Their complexions were sallow in the last degree; and their appearance bore out their reputation of being of weak intellect. This character, I was told, had for many years been declining, and was now nearly obliterated, among the reputed Cagots, through the mixture of new blood. But the appearance of those whom I have just described so nearly corresponded to the written descriptions of the mediæval Cagots, that I should be inclined to acquiesce in the tradition of the place, which excluded them from the influence of intermarriages with the people of Bigorre.

They were engaged in different occupations: many of them being still carpenters. This calling, it appears, was originally the usual one of the Cagots at Montgaillard, where their dwellings were classified as the "Quartier des Cagots ou des Charpentiers." In the Vallée de Bastan they have been millers for several generations. There, also, they have nearly commingled with the rest of the population. But the interest which this proscribed race, more than all others,

continue to excite—the mysteries in which their origin and their calamities have been involved—the successive theories of their history which have served to keep alive the spark of ratiocination in Pyrenean archæology—may justify me in entering upon the historical question which is here at issue. In doing so, I must acknowledge my obligations to MM. Fauriel, Michel, Ramon, Palassou, and others, to whose laborious researches and ingenious deductions (however differing from one another) I am largely indebted.

By the theories of different writers, the Cagots have been assumed to have been the descendants of the Goths who invaded Aquitaine in the fifth century, and of the survivors of those who were defeated by Clovis in the battle of Vouillé—to have been the descendants of the Arabs defeated by Charles Martel at Poictiers in 732—to have been Albigenses ruined by the crusades against that people in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—to have represented the Christians from the surrounding provinces who returned from pilgrimages to the Holy Land with the taint of leprosy—and to have been of Jewish origin, like the Chuetas of Mayorga. The

philological difficulty appears to have been as great as the ethnological, and nearly as many theories have been advanced in explanation of the name of "Cagot." All the historical positions which I have mentioned appear to be similarly indefensible. It may conduce to clearness, however, if I reserve the objections to these theories for the places where they affect my own argument; which is thus far directly the reverse of them, that whereas they all proceed on the supposition that these races assumed their distinctive character through their antagonism to the Central Power in France, that which appears to me to be the only satisfactory conclusion supposes them to have first assumed this character under the peculiar favour of that Central Power.

The first position to be proved, then, in an inquiry into their origin, is, that (whether or not they were really afflicted with leprosy) they were subjected to the same peculiar regulations, both civil and ecclesiastical, as other lepers.

In the first place, the restrictions imposed upon the Cagots in regard to the rights of worship and sepulture were identical with those provided for the regulation of lepers under the third Council of Latran, held in 1179. By that

Council it was provided that they should have a distinct cemetery, a distinct place in the church, and that they should be exempted from the ministration "proprii sacerdotis."* Under this last stipulation, probably, the Cagots were denied the sacraments. Secondly, in regard to civil rights, the Cagots were subjected in practice to the same disability of bearing arms with the class of lepers under the regulation of the Maladerie d'Amiens, A.D. 1305. This analogy, attested on behalf of the Cagots by nearly all the inquirers into their origin, is similarly attested on behalf of the lepers of Amiens in the "Mémoires et Documents publiés par la Société d'Histoire et d'Archéologie de Genève" (vol. i. p. 122). Thirdly, it appears that, while the Cagots were excluded from all offices and from many civil rights, the ancient laws of Calais excluded the families of those who might be attacked with leprosy from municipal privileges.† Fourthly, the testimony of five Cagots, according to the statements of MM. Fauriel and Michel, was regarded as equivalent to that of one of the rest of the com-

* "Sacros. Conc.," quoted by Michel.

† "Usances particulières de la Ville et Banlieue de Calais," vol. i. p. 18.

munity, in judicial procedures. Similarly by the customs of Beauvoisis, it appears that the testimony of lepers was not received in courts of justice.* Fifthly, "Le dernier comme le plus grave des principales accusations portés par le peuple contre les Cagots et les Caqueux (says M. Michel), était d'entretenir un commerce avec l'esprit du mal . . . . . Cette imputation leur était commune avec les lépreux." (vol. i. c. 4.) Sixthly, by the terms of the first rubric of the Ecclesiastical Court of Béarn, the Cagots enjoyed certain privileges in taxation corresponding to those extended to the regular and secular clergy. Similarly, the Provincial Council of Auch forbade, under pain of excommunication, the levying of taxes alike upon regulars, seculars, and lepers.† It will be conceded, then, that this proscribed race were so far accounted lepers as to be subjected both to the civil and ecclesiastical enactments provided for that caste.

The second question, then, arises,—in what manner did this charge of leprosy originate? This question, in fact, is directly connected with the origin of the Cagots.

*. "Les Coutumes de Beauvoisis," c. 39.

† "Sacrosancta Concilia," vol. ii.

Here, then, applies the theory of the Abbé Venuti, that the Cagots are the descendants of the Christians of Navarre, Béarn, and other provinces, who undertook the earliest pilgrimages to Palestine, and that they returned with the infection of leprosy. Plausible, however, as such a theory may appear, it is wholly unsupported by any historical evidence whatever. It is generally believed, indeed, that the first pilgrims brought back with them the taint of infection from the East; but there is no evidence to show that the Cagots did actually suffer from leprosy, although there is abundant evidence that they were subjected to such an imputation in the theory of the law. In what manner, then, can we reconcile their subjection to such a system of legislation with the non-existence, in fact, of leprosy among them?

It is clear, at least, that if the terms 'heresy' and 'leprosy' were not used interchangeably in the early ages of the Church, a condition of leprosy was deemed inalienable from a condition of heresy. This is referred by one writer to the confusion introduced into ideas and notions by the mystical language of the age. Thus we find that the Goths, having been Arians, had passed

for heretics, and were therefore involved in the suspicion of leprosy. This is to be found in the Ecclesiastical History of Gregory of Tours (books v. and vi.). Thus, again, the same author, in his work, "De Miraculis S. Martini," fully participates in the superstitious opinions of his age, which avowed the inseparable nature of the physical and the moral taint. "Rex unitatem Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti confessus, cum omni domo sua chrismatus est. *Squalor leprœ a populo pellitur*, et omnes infirmi salventur, nec unquam ibi postea usque nunc super aliquem lepræ morbus apparuit" (book i. c. 11). Once more: in his "Ecclesiastical History of the Franks," Gregory, as M. Fauriel observes, assigns the name of leprosy to the idolatry of Clovis (book ii. c. 31). I might adduce many other instances in support of this truth. As, therefore, it is contrary to physiology to suppose any such dependence of physical condition upon religious orthodoxy, it follows that the taint of heresy itself must have been regarded, through the influence either of superstition or of allegorical language, as a presumptive evidence of leprosy, and that that presumption, as such, must have been at variance with facts.

There can, therefore, *à priori*, be no greater reason to assign a reputation of leprosy, in any people of that period, to the actual existence of leprosy, than to the actual existence of heresy. There being, then, no external evidence to support the opinion of Venuti, a theory ascribing the historical condition of the Cagots to the influence of heresy is quite as probable as that which would ascribe it to leprosy. If, moreover, external evidence in support of the former theory is to be adduced, the balance of probability must incline in favour of their heresy. What, then, is this external evidence?

While Arianism continued to exist in the South of Europe long after its suppression in the North—and while the region of the Pyrenees appears to have been peculiarly subjected to its influence—a new heresy on the subject of the Incarnation, commonly confounded with Arianism, was promulgated by the Bishops of Urgel and Toledo, in the vicinity of some of the proscribed races. While this heresy was at its height, several of these proscribed colonies, according to M. Fauriel, took the name of Arians, in place of that of Chrestiaas (Christians), their original designation. In the district of Bordelais is a spot

traditionally inhabited by a Cagot race, and called *Camparrian* (derived, apparently, from Campus Arianus), in the parish of Canejan en Cernès. In immediate proximity to this, is a place called les Gahets, or les Gaffets. Of the substantial identity of the term "Gaffets" with that of "Cagots," no question has, I believe, been raised in any quarter. "Gafo," derived from the Hebrew "Cafah," a cripple, denotes leprosy in Spanish. The physicians of Montpellier, in the fourteenth century, had classified lepers, either specially or generally, under the term "Cassati." Hence, in the sixteenth century, M. Joubert, of the same university, speaks of those afflicted with an equivocal species of leprosy as Cassots or Capots. In the seventeenth century the name appears to have undergone another change, and M. Mingelousaulx, of Bordeaux, then designates under the name of Cagots those whom Joubert had adverted to under the earlier name of Cassots or Capots.* Moreover, the Goths, as I have already said, were commonly regarded as Arians; and there appears to have existed, as I shall hope to show, a prominent Gothic element in this proscribed race. In addition to this, a general

* Michel, i. c. 4.

tradition of heresy appears, in the popular view, to have attached to the Cagots. This evidence, though somewhat defective, is altogether, perhaps, sufficient to impart a high degree of probability to the supposition that the Cagots fell under the taint of heresy in the early mediæval period.

Such a theory — while it is by much more plausible than that of the Abbé de Venuti, which is founded on mere conjecture—suffices, of course, to account for the later condition of the Cagots. But it does not in itself explain in what manner these individuals were singled out from the rest of the community, and were subjected to a tyranny from which their immediate neighbours were completely free. Such a distinction seems to imply the existence of an anterior distinction in the condition and origin of this race.

Here, however, I may observe, that the theory which, after acknowledging their fall through the rise of heresy, regards the Cagots as the remnants of the Albigenses, appears to be quite untenable. The Albigenses had not established their distinctive character till near the close of the twelfth century, and the Albigensian Crusades were not terminated until early in the

thirteenth. Now it happens that the proscribed race is spoken of under the term "Gaffos," in an ecclesiastical law of Navarre of the year 1074, and more than a century before the rise of the Albigensian Crusades.* The Cagots, therefore, according to the etymology of this term, as well as from other concurrent evidence, had already attained their proscription before the rise of those Crusades.

We arrive, then, at the conclusion, that this race probably derived their original idiosyncrasy from some military contest or political convulsion, and that they were probably alien from their neighbours in physical origin. How, therefore, did they establish themselves in the Pyrenees?

M. Palassou ably confutes the theory that these Cagots represent the Goths who invaded Aquitaine in the fifth century, and were afterwards defeated by Clovis in the battle of Vouillé. Only thirty-five years, he observes, intervened between the conquest of Béarn by these Goths and the battle in which their dominion was overthrown. Would that interval have sufficed

* M. P. de Marca's remarks on the Ancien For de Navarre.

for the establishments which the Cagots formed in Béarn? Are not those traces of the early Cagots wholly at variance with the character of the Goths? And would not the whole Gothic body have retreated into Spain, where they would have found a refuge against the victorious arms of Clovis?*

Is there, then, any greater force in the theory of M. de Marca, that the Cagots are purely of Arabian origin, and represent the remnant of the host defeated at Poictiers in 732 by Charles Martel? Would not the Arabians, after Poictiers, have retreated into Spain, as the Goths, after Vouillé? More than all, the only fragmentary populations, scattered like the more modern Cagots among the Pyrenean valleys, passed in the ninth and tenth centuries under the dis-

* I have noticed that M. Ramon has been unfairly derided, in Mr. Ford's "Handbook of Spain," for having referred the origin of this people to the Goths, on the ground that the Goths were the most honoured race of Spain, and that, therefore, no descendants of theirs could have encountered the indignities sustained by the Cagots. There is, in fact, scarcely any doubt (as it will be seen) of a Gothic element in the Cagot race; and this critic appears to forget that the interested tyranny of an ecclesiastical and a civil power may occasionally countervail the force of social prepossessions.

tinctive title of Christians (Chrestiaas), which, however sincere their religious conversion might then have become, would scarcely have been conferred distinctively, among surrounding Christian races, on the representatives of the Arabian power.

The research of M. Fauriel here offers, I think, a conclusive answer to the question at issue. The testimony of Eginhard, as we all know, informs us that Charlemagne, in 778, undertook an expedition against the Arabs, in support of the Christians on the Ebro. These Christians became an auxiliary force to the Carlovingian army. Soon after this invasion, M. Fauriel tells us, a considerable body of Spanish and Arab Christians passed the Pyrenean frontier in search of a refuge from the persecution of the Mahometan Arabs. They were the most fully compromised of all the partisans of Charlemagne, and lived among the valleys of the Pyrenees, apart from the rest of the population.* The terms of a decree made by Charlemagne, in 812 (quoted by M. Michel), in favour of exiles then dwelling in the Pyrenees and elsewhere in the south of France, conclusively show, as M.

* "Hist. de la Gaule Méridionale," vol. iii.

Michel observes, that these exiles were the same Christians, or were the descendants of those Christians, who had followed Charlemagne on his return into France. If these, then, were the original Cagots, of what race were they?

Now it appears certain, from the names which are cited in the decree of Charlemagne, that this population was compounded of different races—that these Christian exiles were Goths, Arabs, and Latinised Christians, united under a common fear of Mahometan persecution, and under a common assurance of Frankish protection. The charter of Louis le Débonnair, dated 815, grants them certain civil rights; and these rights are not only similar to those which the Capitularies assign to freemen, but to those previously enjoyed by the Visigoths. Successive documents attest their continued existence in the Pyrenees for a long period after that date. If, then, they enjoyed such political consideration in the empire, by what means did they afterwards decline into the miserable condition of the mediæval Cagots?

It appears from a decree of Louis le Débonnair (quoted also by M. Michel), that so early as the year 818 these emigrants found

themselves exposed to the hostility of their Christian neighbours. The Carlovingian princes had a double aim in the establishment of these emigrants on the Gallic frontier. First, it was their policy to place there those who were most interested in the defence of the empire, through their having no hope of quarter under the contingency of an Arab invasion. Secondly, they served also to defend them against a rebellion by the disaffected Aquitanians. Thus a perpetual hostility arose between these emigrants and their Gallic neighbours, and on the vigour of the Central Power must alone have depended the preservation of their rights. We find that the Counts elected to be their protectors soon began to despoil them, and (irrespectively of the later rise of heresy among them) their privileges could scarcely have survived the decline of the Carlovingian polity.

It being conceded, then, that such was the origin of this race, it becomes easy to account for their special acquisition of the name of Christians.

Finally, that these Christians were identical with the "Cagots" may be deduced satisfactorily, I think, from the fact that, whereas

isolated populations in certain districts are described in the Chartulaire of the Abbaye de Luc as "Chrestiaas" in the year 1000, similarly isolated populations in the same districts are described in the Ancien For de Navarre as "Gaffos" in the year 1074.

Can it be supposed, then, that an interval corresponding to the lifetime of a single generation of men would have sufficed for the destruction of this peculiar race, which had already survived the changes and chances of two hundred years, and for the establishment of another race, marked by the same peculiarities, in the very regions occupied by the preceding population, and without any historical evidence either of the extinction of the one, or of the institution of the other?

This, then, appears to be the most reasonable deduction to be drawn from existing testimony on the much controverted question of the origin and history of the Cagots.

CHAPTER VII.

VISIT TO THE MOUNTAINS AND MOUNTAINEERS OF EASTERN CATALONIA.

I HAD now passed successively from the contamination of the leprous and heretical Cagots, and from the dusty archæology of the Roman Calagorris.* I was now bending onward for the shores of the Mediterranean, for the Eastern Pyrenees, and for the Republic of Andorre. My course lay through the mountains of Catalonia and the plains of Foix. A new phase of Pyrenean life was now before me, intervening between the population which I have last attempted to describe and the republican commonwealth of the Carlovingian kings. Once more among the Baths, I found myself at Bagnères de Luchon—the only watering-place in all

* I regret that I have no space for a proper treatment of this subject.

France which is worthy to be visited—the emporium of luxury, in the zenith of natural beauty.

There are only two watering-places in Europe which appear to me to possess any real attraction to the stranger: these are Ischl and Luchon. They are both far away from the ordinary path of the tourist; both are embosomed in mountains; both the head-quarters of him who visits some of the most varied and glorious scenery of earth; and either, the nucleus of Luxury in its own region. Luchon is in the Central Pyrenees; Ischl in the Styrian Alps.

But over Ischl, Art has thrown a diviner charm than any that Nature has bestowed. That art rests in its inimitable and unequalled dinners. In cookery, Vienna and Paris carry away the palm from all the capitals of the earth; but as, in this respect, Vienna, in my view, surpasses Paris, even so Ischl surpasses Vienna. It is the *sanctum sanctorum* of the great Austrian capital. Far away from the din of great cities, secluded in mountains, and approached by lakes, lie those fair palaces and dwellings which serve to personify that great, sublime, and constructive art, which has there attained its most splendid and most extensive development. All over the world,

there is no place like Ischl for its dinners. It developes the greatest advancement of all the leading systems of European cookery. There is no other such place on earth equal to thee for thy dinners and thy wine;—hail, Ischl! worthy of the gods—the Styrian Olympus of Nectar and Ambrosia!

It is all very well for valetudinarian Englishmen, with weak stomachs and worse digestions, either worn out by a wilful adoption of the English system of dinners, to sneer at all this. But, in truth, Cookery is a great art; and more than this, it might be moulded into a great science. It has taxed the intellect of ages; and it is even now without that complete system and classification which its various European schools may legitimately demand. What can be more worthy of such systematising analysis than that art which has so taxed the intellect of man? What can be a more philanthropic or a nobler task than that of developing the gifts of the creation, so as to increase the pleasures and the bounties, of which the elements are scattered by Nature in profusion on mankind, so as to promote the health, and thereby the happiness and longevity, of man?

How marvellously varied are all these schools of cookery in Europe! How intense the line of demarcation between different members of the same great social commonwealth! Contrast only Northern and Southern Germany. The cookery of the former is the most vicious and degrading that ever served to sustain the properties of life in a great civilised commonwealth. The cookery of the latter is fit for the seventh heaven of Mahomet. So different, again, according to my experience, are the schools of England, of Italy, of Spain, of Greece, of Turkey, and of France. In the latter country, the North is nearly as superior to the South, as in Germany the South is superior to the North.

Thus, in its dinners, Luchon yields precedency to Ischl, its rival in other points of view. But Luchon has disdained the infamous taste of southerly France; and "the child (to paraphrase the sublime language of Mr. Burke) has wished to assimilate with its parent, and to respect the beauteous countenance of *Parisian cookery!*"

Bagnères de Luchon is thus different from the other Pyrenean watering-places in every attribute, from the wild grandeur of its scenery to the comparative orthodoxy of its *tables d'hôte*.

You do not there encounter the shoals of your own countrymen that congregate at Wiesbaden, and other such places on the cockney-loving Rhine. All the other Pyrenean watering-places to the westward are intolerable. The only baths along the eastern range which I can recommend to a traveller are those of Ax and Ussat in Ariège. They have not the attractions of Luchon; but there is a simplicity about them which is unknown to the other watering-places. In a word, they excel because they aim at little. Luchon excels because it attains that at which it aims; but the other Pyrenean baths deplorably fail, because their success falls so woefully short of their aim.

Every one who has been at Luchon has visited the Lac d'Oo, the Lac d'Espingo, and the Val du Lys. I will not attempt to describe what may be already familiar to many, and what, moreover, has been before this described elsewhere. I was soon on my way from Bagnères de Luchon for the Catalonian frontier, by way of the Port de Venasque and the giant mountain, the Maladetta.

Grand beyond description is the view before the traveller as he reaches the Port de Venasque,

at the summit of the enormous heights which here divide the territories of France and Spain. He there finds himself at the edge (on the Spanish side of the Port) of a steep and precipitous ravine, seeming as though it extended down into the very depths of the earth; and yet, at its very lowest, some eight thousand feet above the Mediterranean level. Opposite to us, and divided by this yawning chasm, lay the immense form of the Maladetta, girt with snow, and towering above the whole Pyrenean range. Through this valley, and before the heat of autumn had expended itself elsewhere, blew a gale charged with frozen air.

The ascent of the Maladetta is now not altogether impracticable to those who are able to encounter great exertion, and who do not object to be put into harness, and to be driven in a team by a trio of mountaineers. The danger rests, of course, in the insidious nature of the snow-drifts, which are not less hazardous than Irish bogs. Those, therefore, who wish to climb the mountain, are compelled to wait (like the constituent elements of an Oriental caravan at the edge of the Desert) until an adequate number of candidates for the enterprise has accumulated,

either at Luchon or at some less hospitable hospice at the edge of the mountains; when all these unfortunates are strapped together into a vertical column, in single file, and are marched up the snowy ascent, charging the glaciers on their route. The object of all this is obvious enough. If the leaders should fall in, the wheelers, to whom they are attached, pull them out. The whole team is kept in a right line, and by this means goes over the same ground. There is no such artificial facility for the ascent of the Maladetta as exists for the ascent of Mont Blanc: it is a far less beaten route, and, I should be disposed to think, a more hazardous experiment. To the weak (or to those of ordinary strength, whose powers fail to satisfy the exertion demanded for the enterprise), the alternative, 'go on, or perish,' must be anything but agreeable. No doubt the stronger help to drag the weaker out of the difficulty; but it would seem hard, under such circumstances, to choose between being dragged involuntarily over endless regions of eternal ice, and being chained there stationary, like Prometheus, for ever and a day.

From this point I had wished to have traversed the mountains of Western Catalonia,

through the Val d'Aran and the Val de Pallas, in the direction of the Republic of Andorre. There is a route, difficult enough, but just passable, through Venasque and Viella, which leads into the Val de Pallas, and thence to the frontiers of the Republic. This route between Luchon and Andorre, the shortest in point of distance, is longest in point of time. Other considerations, however, than the difficulty of the expedition—which would only have served to lend it another charm—precluded me, to my great regret, from pursuing my journey through the Catalonian mountains from this point. From the Maladetta, indeed, I entered, but failed to traverse, the Vallée d'Aran. I returned to Luchon, and from thence passed along the French frontier into Ariège, when I visited Foix and Tarascon. From the latter place I accomplished my project of visiting the mountaineers of Western Catalonia, passing through the French Vallée de Vic Dessos, crossing the Spanish frontier, and thence entering the Vallée de Cardos, where I found myself in the heart of the mountain-society of Catalonia. I need not chronicle the weary detail of my journey to Tarascon, where I procured horses and

a guide. I now recrossed the frontier into Spain, and the civilisation of France soon faded from my track.

I was not favourably predisposed towards the Catalonian mountaineers; but an incident which occurred as I was winding my way from Tarascon through the Vallée de Vic Dessos, towards the Spanish frontier, materially altered my prepossessions in regard to the mountaineers. I here encountered a countryman, now becoming altogether strange to me—in fact, an Englishman. I could see, at a glance, that he was a lounger at the baths of Ussat, from which I was not now distant, and was probably taking an afternoon ride, and had got out of his reckoning.

I had guessed right: he pulled up as I passed; and in a tone of unparalleled affectation, not unmingled with alarm, asked me the way to Ussat. He had mistaken his road, lost his way, and in some unaccountable manner had got into the Vallée de Vic Dessos, the very name of which apparently made him shudder through its remoteness from the idea of civilisation. He had left his soul behind him at the baths of Ussat, and was going back thither to

find it, if mayhap it existed at all. The Vallée d'Ariège, in which Ussat is situated, runs transversely with the Vallée de Vic Dessos, with which, however, it has little communication. I thought with kindliness on the pretensions of the Catalonians, in comparison with those of my fellow-countryman. I could only compare him, in the Vallée de Vic Dessos, to an unfortunate hippopotamus that had accidentally swam out of the Nile, and had lost its way in the watery wilderness of the Levant!

Once more in Spain, we bent our course down the icy vale descending from Mont Collat, on our way to a village where we purposed to pass the night, *en route* for the Val de Pallas. At the most difficult and precipitous point, the clouds descended to the earth; and the view before us, just now spreading over the boundless highlands of Catalonia, barely extended to our horses' heads. It was a startling novelty, to be carried over the mountains by animals to all appearance destitute both of heads and tails! We were summarily brought to a dead halt, and nothing but the closest possible proximity prevented us from being utterly lost to each other. But the clouds went onward on

their sublime, ethereal way; and the lurid light of an autumn sun, struggling with dark thunder-clouds above, once more disclosed the course before us.

The deluge and the torrent, however, were close at hand: down they came simultaneously from the heavens and from the mountain-tops: the wind roared amid the pine-woods, and swept down the rock-clefts with its hideous howl: the crashing of the thunder shook the very mountains to their base; the lightning transformed the sombre fir-forests into fiery groves; the new-born cataract swept over the verdure of the hill-sides; solitary trees that had survived the seventy years of man, snapped in their very trunks, were hurled down the precipice in the sport of the whirlwind; and the dissolved mists, mingling with the dark substance of the soil, discharged down the precipices torrents of liquid coal! It was beneath the shelter of rocks alone that we could proceed; and even by their sides we were nearly blown off our horses' backs. The storm lasted nearly two hours. Ere its close, our track had become almost impassable. The surcharged waters of the Essera burst on every side around us; and

paths gave place to cataracts. We were at last forced to dismount, and climb the rocks forming the *débris* from the enormous ridge which lay above us. The horses climbed after us as they could; more than once rolling on their sides. At length we reached less uneven ground, and a commanding view. The storm had spent itself, the wind was hushed; and the dark thunder-scroll was rolled back over one-half of the angry heaven. We were on the boundary of the two empires. To our left lay the dark plains of Catalonia, still in all their wild and murky gloom: to the right, quivering in the brilliant glare of an autumnal sun, were spread before us the rich and golden vales of Ariège.

At dark we reached the wretched village of Arros, the accommodation of which, forming the middle passage between Tarascon and the Vallée d'Aran, was something decidedly inferior to that afforded by the "middle passage" between the African and American continents. If there had only been "some village *Wilberforce*, with dauntless breast" to mitigate the horrors of our reception at Arros, how grateful should we have been to the progress of philanthropy on

the frontier! But we left the village early in the morning; and we endeavoured to forget it soon.

The mountaineers and the lowlanders of Catalonia are not essentially different in manners, thoughts, or modes of life. This difference, indeed, is less observable than between the mountaineers and the people of the plain in the other provinces. It may be accounted for, partly by the circumstance that the highlanders and the lowlanders are, in a far greater degree, a commoner race than those of the other provinces. Ethnologists are generally agreed that the Catalonians represent the commingling of the conquering Celts with the conquered Iberians, without any later intermixture of Teutonic or Arabian blood, or at least in any considerable degree. Their geographical position, in an extremity or corner of Spain, explains the early isolation which thus sustained the purity of the Iberio-Celtic blood. Now the general isolation of mountains has had a similar effect with the special isolation of Catalonia; and the result, in either case, has been, that the irruptions of barbarous hosts involved comparatively little change in the physical character of succeeding

generations. Thus, then, while the highlanders aud lowlanders of other provinces are altogether different; those of Catalonia exhibit a less marked distinction. The approximation would, no doubt, be more close, but for the circumstance that commerce has given in Catalonia a species of idiosyncrasy to the people of the plain. But there are many moral characteristics applicable to either class.

It would be hard to say, geographically, whether the Vallée d'Aran were in Spain or in France: it is totally encompassed by mountains; but those mountains are higher to the southward than on the French frontier. In a social as well as in a political sense, however, it is unquestionably Spain; and the people of the valley are Catalonians to the back-bone.

At Tirbia, where we got into very tolerable quarters, the extent and fertility of the valley had done much to banish the wild seclusion which generally characterises the Catalonian mountains. The soil was devoted as well to agricultural as to pastoral purposes. The population had little of that boorishness of manners which it is the fashion to ascribe to the Catalonian district: they were, in fact, hospitable

and civil. We were accommodated at an old farm-house; and as we were now about to leave the more civilised district of the Vallée de Cardos for the wilder scenes of the Val de Pallas, we had good reason to suspect that we should soon repent our change of quarters.

We left Tirbia with the view of reaching Espot or Tirvia, in the Val de Pallas, towards the summit of the vast chain of heights which divide the two valleys of Catalonia with a gigantic barrier which empires might have envied. The scene before us underwent a total change. We had now the mountains in all their grandeur—wildness, stillness, solitude—neither cultivation, nor art, nor human dwelling, nor sign, except some half-worn foot-track, of the presence or proximity of man. Toward evening we reached, at length, our resting-place for the night. Here we halted at the dwellings of the mountaineers—the peaceful and poetic shepherds of the Catalonian heights. They received us with the hospitality of simple times and simple lands; but we had cautiously brought with us provisions from the farm of Tirbia, sufficient to satisfy the probable contingency of dearth and famine in the Vale of Pallas.

Our host turned out to be one of those rustic mountain-bards who are to be met with in nearly all the territories of the Pyrenees, and whom I have not yet attempted to describe. He was a shepherd—a shepherd, indeed, of the better class: but it is with these pastoral mountaineers that the infant poetry of Europe still lingers in the solitude of the Pyrenees. He was possessed of much intelligence: there was something imaginative in his countenance, implying that he had been designed by Nature for a superiority over the other poets of the mountains. He was versed, like his fraternity, in the countless legends of chivalry, of mystery, and of magic, which invest alike the hill, the vale, the stream, the forest, and the tower, in the mediæval lore of the Pyrenees. With these he had charged his memory, and he would relate for an hour together olden deeds of fable and romance.

But these subjects did not suit his muse. Dwelling amid the deeds of old, he composed more homely songs, at one time relating to his flocks, and at another conjuring up the ideality of faithless and forsaking mistresses. In these lays there was much of the spirit of the Trou-

badours, and a certain similarity to the poetry of Roussillon and of Béarn. So far as I might judge of their merits, I should be disposed to say that there was much that was pleasing, though little or nothing that could claim a higher standard, or be termed beautiful. But there was a uniform sweetness of cadence, as the verses passed from the lips of the bard, and a harmony of diction, which gave a grace to song in the sweet dialects of Romance, unattainable in the polished languages of Northern Europe.

But besides these songs and ditties of his own, he could repeat those of elder generations—the traditionary songs of the Pyrenees, relating more often to deeds of chivalry and valour in the feudal and mediæval age. Thus

> He began a long low *mountain* song
> Of ancient days, ere tyranny grew strong.

It related to an invasion of the Val de Pallas, either by a Count of Urgel or a Count of Foix, and to the hardy and intrepid resistance of the mountaineers. With legends such as these, whether thrown into the garb of poetry, or still existing in simpler words, the Pyrenean mountains are all eloquent.

In this character of my host, the poet-shepherd, there was little that was peculiar. Poetry of a certain sort, was, as I have said, a common attribute of a large proportion of the dwellers among the mountain flocks. And let us not disparage the nature of their effusions, when we remember how essentially constructive is the poetic art; how the modern imaginative literature of Europe arose from small beginnings; how its progress kept pace with the progress of civilisation and of the arts; how the genius of the Trecentisti, developed several centuries after the revival of imaginative power, was coincident with the social splendour of the Italian Republics; and how the absence of all extrinsic aids must necessarily have retarded the development of the innate poetic genius of the people of the Pyrenees. We may rather wonder that the spark of early poetry remains after the lapse of a thousand years, and without factitious aid for its maintenance or improvement. If it has been truly said of Wordsworth, that "he cast a glory around the humblest conditions of humanity," more truly may it be said of the Pyrenean shepherds, that the humblest conditions of humanity cast a glory on themselves!

CHAPTER VIII.

VIEW OF THE STATE OF SPAIN.*

As political disquisitions are more often regarded in the character of encroachments on the domain of a narrative of travels, I shall offer very brief observations on the condition and prospects of the Spanish kingdom. But I can scarcely do otherwise than attempt a solution of a few of those problems which are now prominently suggested by the present political activity of Spain, and which must always comprehend the vital interests of its population. My own personal acquaintance with the Spanish territories has, indeed, been very partial. On the other hand, there are many subjects for the discussion of which such a partial acquaintance, supported by other means of information, may suffice. The reader, nevertheless, may regard the present chapter, brief as it will be, as exceedingly un-

* It is not from the present visit to Spain alone that the following observations are deduced.

interesting, nor shall I be disposed to question the accuracy of his judgment.

I will endeavour to offer a solution, imperfect as it must necessarily be, to the important and comprehensive problem, What are the conditions in the social and political constitution of Spain, which have hitherto retarded the growth of prosperity among its population, and of stability in its government?

I am convinced that no view of this controverted question can be more erroneous than that which would ascribe the existing position of Spain to a complete or irretrievable demoralisation in the people. Nothing is more common, yet nothing is more fallacious, than to regard the inhabitants of the three great peninsulas of Southern Europe,—the Greeks, the Italians, and the Spaniards,—as races similarly deficient in every element of social and political morality, and, therefore, similarly incapable of realising a complete system of national civilisation. Whatever may be the truth of this position, so far as the former population is concerned, it is very incorrect as a description of the Spanish race.

The Spaniards, viewed as a whole, are, I am inclined to believe, essentially a noble people.

They form an aggregation of nationalities, each of which, while professedly and often vitally at enmity with the other, possesses the common characteristics of patriotism, of chivalrous courage, of public, and also of a certain private, honour, though born, perhaps, rather of sentiment than of moral principle. Between a people corresponding to such a description and a people altogether demoralised, there is a distinction nearly as broad as that between an African desert and a luxuriant though uncultivated soil. Yet, in spite of this characterisation of the Spanish race, we find (until the accession of Espartero at least) the lowest political morality in the State; a frequency of civil disorder throughout the nation; a general reputation of private dishonesty; a total absence of wealth, and of the ordinary refinements of social life; a general ignorance in secular education, and a general infidelity in religious opinion; a want of trade and of material improvements, serving to place the Spanish territories immeasurably behind all the other sovereignties of Western Europe. What, then, are at once the causes which have produced, and the changes which may obviate, such a condition of public affairs?

National miseries even greater than these may be fairly attributed to the influence of misgovernment and a vicious established religion. These causes in Spain have reciprocally acted upon each other, and have increased the evil influence which either element might singly have developed. The vices of the religious establishment, by discrediting the Christian Faith, and thus annulling one great moral influence over society, have aided to demoralise the government; and the existing system of misgovernment has not only tolerated, but indirectly supported, the vices of the religious establishment. Thus, the two great purifying influences of a political community have been transformed into elements of national demoralisation, mutually strengthening their action upon each other.

Granting, then, that this two-fold cause has formed the mainspring in the present condition of Spain—and that the establishment of Government upon a more solid foundation (even than that on which it now rests under the Progresista party), is essential to the accomplishment of a really comprehensive system of national improvement—what scheme of polity, it may be asked,

appears best adapted to the production of such a result?

Now the existing form of government in Spain, it is notorious, has totally disregarded the claims of nationalities to a separate recognition in the formation of the polity of the State. Spain, as I have said, has scarcely any existence in a national point of view. The broad provincial distinctions of the land are incompatible with its moral union, and therefore with its strong political cohesion. In what degree, then, would a frame of polity corresponding to these national distinctions realise the necessities of the people?

Every consideration—at once of moral character, of national sympathy, and of physical configuration—points to the truth that Modern Spain is designed to form a Confederation of Independent States. That country, indeed, illustrates very forcibly the philosophical truth of the remark of M. Guizot, in his *Histoire de la Civilisation en Europe*, that a complete social civilisation is essential to the maintenance of close relations in extensive states, and that, without such close relations, states cannot really and morally exist. Hence, he says, they become dissolved; and to

the force of this truth he ascribes the dissolution of the Carlovingian Empire, and its division into smaller Monarchies. There is no more cohesion at this day in the Spanish than in the Austrian empire; and both the one and the other have been moulded together by dynastic alliances and dynastic marriages, which have subordinated the claims of nationalities to private interests. International considerations, no doubt, dictate the expediency of the political cohesion of either empire,—that of the Austrian for the general balance of power, and that of the Spanish for the independence of the South. If, however, the scheme of a Confederation, like that of Switzerland, were capable of realising such a cohesion, among states otherwise independent, what would be the facilities or objections to such a combination of centripetal and centrifugal force?

Now it is certain, I think, that any Confederacy of Spanish States which did not proceed upon the basis of republican government would be quite illusory. With a monarchical polity in each component state, there could be no real subordination to the Central Power in grave international questions; and without such sub-

ordination, there could be no security either for the political or territorial independence of the Peninsula against external aggression. It is always so difficult to control the exercise of any species of kingly power, in external relations, that no guarantee for a real constitutional union between the different states could possibly be obtained; and such a form of government would rather engender national rivalries among small contiguous states, than lessen existing divisions. A kingly confederation in Spain would be exposed to greater dangers than the existing kingly confederation in Germany, inasmuch as the national differences of Spain are already stronger than those of Germany. If, therefore, the traditionary experience of German diplomacy has shown how completely inadequate the Germanic Confederation is to the security of the objects for which it was called into existence, *à fortiori* it may be assumed that such a confederacy would be inadequate in Spain.

Even if every other difficulty were dispelled, it is obvious that a choice of sovereigns for each province would be impracticable; for the existing currents of political opinion in favour of different aspirants to royal power are too strong to be

subdued into an acquiescence in any symmetrical arrangement, such as that which a kingly confederation of states would imply. The theory, therefore, which has been much discussed during the last few years, of a confederacy of states governed by monarchical principles, must be consigned to the land of Utopia.

I am disposed to regard the scheme of a Republican Confederacy as equally impracticable. Such a polity would, I admit, secure in a far higher degree the independence and the cohesion of the body politic of Spain. I should not despair, indeed, of seeing it invested, after an undisturbed existence of some twenty years, with a strength and a solidity, not perhaps equal to that of America, but equal, at least, to that of Switzerland. I believe that, after such an existence, it would be found to have wrought a total transformation of Spain—to have maintained its independence against foreign power—to have developed its resources in a degree now, perhaps, incalculable—to have raised public morality to a height at which Spain would marvel—to have established order, honesty, wealth, and civilisation—by conferring the government, as such a system might confer it,

upon wise, prudent, and honourable men, who yet exist, I believe, in all the provinces of Spain; and on whom, I believe also, the popular favour would fall in the first instance. Wise laws, commercial knowledge, public stability to ensure private enterprise, local administrative vigour, and a determination to reform abuses both civil and religious, are all that Spain requires. Yet they are conditions which I think no other form of polity—which not even the vigour and integrity of Espartero at Madrid—can possibly attain.

I am generally no friend to republican institutions; and it is from no sympathy with Radical politicians that I have drawn this conclusion. I believe that the instances in which such institutions are able to maintain their ground are very exceptional; and that they generally serve to make way for other principles of government.

The scheme of a Federal Republic in Spain is, nevertheless, in my humble view, impracticable, because I believe it could never be once established. The genius of the different populations is thus far assimilated, that it generally recoils from republicanism both in society and

in politics. The Spaniards are essentially a people, (and here I may speak of them as an united body), prone to rely upon the guidance of others. It is the force of this tendency which has given their generals so great and undue an ascendant in the politics of Spain. We have lately, indeed, heard much of a Republican party in that country. But this party, I believe, neither is nor ever will be strong. Those who have no hope of political success under a monarchical government, and those who, more than others, have revolted in years past, from the profligacy of the Central Power, have obviously looked to the rise of a republican constitution as the only condition of prosperity and order. They still form, however, mere exceptions from the general character of the community.

Of all the changes, then, which are threatened by the disturbed condition of the Continent, I confess I should regard the institution of a Federal Republic, much as this question has lately been entertained, as the most improbable. That revolutions may be proclaimed at Madrid, and republican principles be, for the moment asserted alternately with dynastic claims, is far, indeed, from being impossible. But that a settled and com-

prehensive system, constituting the provinces as separate states, and defining again their relation to the Central Power, should actually be established and endure for any period of years, appears to me the most chimerical of all those political predictions which are now popular in Western Europe.

There is, perhaps, no country in which any novel and decided line of policy is more perilous than in Spain. Its population are so much more disposed to act than to reflect, that measures of the most obvious advantage which assail the most ill-founded prejudices, are liable to be defeated and rejected without trial and without consideration. An elaborate policy of reform becomes, therefore, extremely complicated. Having discussed, however, one or two of those theories which appear to be Utopian, let us consider one or two of those which are less impracticable.

It being conceded, then, that a recognition of the existing form of government in Spain forms the safest policy for the community to pursue, it follows that it must be their first object to free the State from the disorders, and to supply the

wants, hitherto attendant upon that form of government, so far as may be compatible with its existence.

The first political problem of the day, arising out of this position, has been—to find an honest Government. Granting that such a problem has received its practical solution in the triumph of the Progresistas, the next problem appears to be —to find the means of strengthening that Government, and of rendering it durable. Upon this basis the whole fabric of reformation rests.

It should then, I think, be a primary object of reform to lessen the asperity of an anti-national centralisation, by a concession of ampler and well-defined privileges to the several provinces. It is certain that no Central Power, whether executive or legislative, can fully understand, and much less conform to, the political idiosyncrasies of each provincial population. Legislation, therefore, proceeding originally from the Central Power, must necessarily be more or less defective; and, consequently, must be more or less inefficient in developing the prosperity of the provinces. I should not be apprehensive that, under a strong Central Government, a concession of ample legislative powers to these pro-

vinces, in theoretical subordination to a central legislative power, would be found to clash with the supremacy of Madrid. On the contrary, such a policy would appear, from the following considerations, indirectly to promote that supremacy.

The army, which in every well-governed state ought to be the protector of an existing Government, has formed in Spain the usual means of its subversion. The revolutions which it has achieved have been accomplished, indeed, through the instrumentality of ambitious and interested leaders. But it is equally true, that the prevalence of provincial dissatisfaction has been the chief means of debauching the army, and of creating in its ranks (often swelled in a moment of tumult by political malcontents) that predisposition to revolt which the Spanish generals have continually called into action.

Now, if this provincial dissatisfaction—which is confessedly born of a want of provincial rights, and of misgovernment by the Central Power—were dispelled by the introduction of such a policy of constitutional reform, it is obvious that a blow would be aimed at the root of military usurpation, and that the Central Power would be freed from one of the greatest dangers

which have threatened its existence. Hence, a more liberal concession of provincial rights would tend at once to national prosperity and to political security.

In an attainment of these objects, nearly all others would, I think, be comprehended.

I have dealt thus far with these general topics, partly because they are the only questions which are not liable to become irrelevant while these observations are passing through the press. But there is no doubt that the dominance of the Progresistas is effecting more towards the social and political reformation of Spain than has been accomplished since the suppression of the great Carlist war. There is one point which is now attracting considerable attention in Europe, and arising out of the policy of that party, on which justice has scarcely been rendered to their administration. I allude to the pending sale of Church property.

This measure is commonly represented as new, unconstitutional, and revolutionary. The first of these positions is incorrect in point of fact; and the others can only be admitted with great reservation. The principle at issue has been conceded by all parties but the Carlists,

who are now few in numbers. The initiative of this measure was not the work of the Progresistas now in power, nor of any of their party, nor even of the reformed Constitution of 1837. The principle was first asserted by the Moderado Goverment of 1835, during the regency of Queen Christina, and was sanctioned by the Estatuto Real, so far as the regulars, or religious orders, were concerned. When, therefore, such a principle had formed, for twenty years, the acknowledged policy of the state, it was scarcely fair to regard its extension as inconsistent with the constitution of the empire.

I do not propose to defend such a measure as an abstract principle, even in Spain. It has been dictated, however, by considerations of urgent necessity. The notorious infamy of the priesthood has fairly escheated their individual title to the revenues and the consideration which they formerly enjoyed. Whether such an argument may apply with equal force to the body politic, involving the fortunes of successors to the existing priesthood, I will not now consider. The principle at issue is, however, one on which we have repeatedly acted in this country, with a certain difference, perhaps, in the degree of its

operation. Nor is there that elasticity in the social commonwealth of Spain which enables its government to reform without radically changing institutions grown vicious by lapse of time, by legislative lethargy, and by domestic convulsion.

The answer, then, to the question at issue appears to be, that it is for the interest of Spain, *first*, that all those theories of dynastic or constitutional innovation which have lately been agitated in Western Europe, should be discountenanced as Utopian schemes; and *secondly*, that no effort should be relaxed for the support of the Progresista cause. This I believe to be the growing conviction of a people daily recoiling more and more from the traditions of a Moderado reign, compounded of public men and Royal women, who repaid their confidence with court intrigue in place of honest government; with public dishonour for patriotic self-denial; with pecuniary corruption for domestic charities; and with helpless slavery for constitutional freedom.

CHAPTER IX.

VISIT TO THE MOUNTAINS AND MOUNTAINEERS OF EASTERN CATALONIA.

I NOW quitted the Val de Pallas and the company of my poet-host, in the north-western mountains of Catalonia, with the triple object of visiting the Republic of Andorre, the north-eastern mountains, and the people of Roussillon. Although the Republic lay most directly on my route, I was induced to defer my journey thither until I had visited the two latter objects of interest, by the consideration that more or less circuity was in any case inevitable with a view of combining these three projects, and that by thus hastening my visit to Roussillon I was likely to arrive in time for its dramatic celebrations. I proceeded, therefore, with my guide down the lateral valley, which extends towards the eastern

mountains of Catalonia, the south-eastern boundary of the Republic, and intervening between the Val de Pallas and Roussillon.

We had been forewarned that the journey was a hazardous one, but I was resolved not to re-enter France by any nearer route than that of Puicerda. This was some forty miles distant, and carried us considerably beyond the Andorrian frontier.

We were tolerably armed; or were, at least, accoutred in such a manner that, if we were not a match for a marauding party, we felt at least entitled to assume some show of defence. This, in fact, is the great point in a campaign among the Spanish mountains; for the banditti both of Catalonia and Arragon, whenever plunder is in sight, usually hold a council of war, at which the policy of an attack is determined by a consideration of the facility with which victory may be attained.

We passed, without disturbance, the long valley of Pallas, which deigned not to sully its traditions with the deeds of marauding campaigners. We now ascended the lateral ridge, which runs transversely with the Pyrenean chain from the Pic de Lossau, where Nature has re-

sisted the encroachments of social life, and has surrendered herself to the dominion of beasts and birds of prey, and to the wildest habits of mankind.

Here, far secluded from the people of the plain, our course led us along the nearly precipitous sides of luxuriant mountains, now culminating near the summit of the height, now descending far into ravines dark and gloomy with their very depth, and virgin of the tread of man. Not manual labour, but the traditionary footsteps of a thousand years, had more often made the only pathway that served to thread the barriers which Nature had interposed to the communion and aggregation of mankind. Here seemed to reign all that was grandest and worthiest on the surface of Earth, and the soul of Nature dwelt apart from the haunts of Man. The grey foliage of the oak and of the beech dispelled the gloom of the vast forests of fir; and these, again, were broken by verdant knolls of moss and fern, alternating with huge barren rocks, and varied with cascades falling from a thousand springs. Towards sunset we passed an array of snowy peaks rising far above the common height of the Pyrenean range; and these

caught, one by one, the last radiance which the sinking orb flung upon their icy crowns: instantaneously the glow passed from peak to peak, as though rather flung from heaven than flashed from the horizontal sun; till each blazed, like Sinai, as a consuming fire, and pregnant with the sublimest eloquence of Nature!

Our first day's journey was not marked by any other rencontre than the incident of our crossing the track of a party of smugglers, who, though sufficiently armed to have been formidable enemies, were too intent on the safe transport of their illicit freight to be solicitous of a skirmish with however small a party who could bring guns and pistols to bear in their defence. The quantity of goods which each man carried on his back through rugged defiles and almost imperceptible pathways, would, I believe, have broken the back of any Englishman upon his own roads. Such was the difference wrought by habit and constitution among the different sons of Adam! One or two of the party, it is true, eyed us in a manner keenly expressive of their sympathetic regret, that they were already too heavily loaded to relieve us of the transport of our own possessions. They would, perhaps, if we had met

them in the dominions of some African Dey, have kindly offered to present us at the court of the slave-dealing potentate. Replying to this equivocal expression by a mechanical glance at the caps upon our half-cocked pistols, we passed on. The moon rose before we reached the shelter we had anticipated for the night, and the hour rendered the compliance of the inmates with our just demands not easy of attainment.

We were at first evidently regarded with great suspicion—not that we were taken for marauders, for the mountaineers of Catalonia acknowledged themselves the monopolists in that line of life—but that we were apparently viewed as political exiles obnoxious to the supervision of the police. And yet the place seemed secluded enough among the mountains to be beyond the reach of political influences. Accordingly, we were subjected to a cross-examination, which a distant view of a preparation for the supper of our host rendered a highly tantalising process. The truth was, I was too hungry to argue, to equivocate, or even to answer at all; and accordingly entered the at once forbidden and forbidding domain, and took possession of a small room, where I desired my guide to bring in my lug-

gage; and abruptly closed the parley by demanding supper immediately. The inhabitants, Spaniards as they were (and Catalonians into the bargain), were somewhat taken aback at such a termination of the dialogue, and proceeded reluctantly to obey. Supper, however, was being served to the household collectively; and having signified my wish to join the party, I sat down with my guide next me, as an interpreter of the patois of the mountains. We talked and supped—in fact, we did as much justice both to the conversational and culinary powers of the inmates of this eccentric dwelling, as though (if the reader will pardon the anachronism) M. Soyer had been entertaining Dr. Johnson, and both "table-talk" and the art of cookery were in their zenith at Romandrin. Suspicion soon vanished, and distrust subsided into civility. The wine was really not bad, it served at least to cheer the hours of evening; and early next day we left Romandrin to skirt along the Spanish side of the Andorrian Pyrenees towards the soil of the Cerdagne, and thus to visit the wildest scenes and the wildest people of Western Europe.

From hence our route became more intricate,

and I was glad to exchange my guide for one better acquainted with the defiles of the Navarrese mountains. He had formed one of the household on whom my elder guide and I had quartered ourselves so unceremoniously at Romandrin. And his knowledge of the character of the highlanders was scarcely less valuable than his geography; for, as I have said, they were a marauding race, more fond of plunder than scrupulous in honesty.

I have no wish to speak in a disparaging manner of the people even of this district of Catalonia. They exhibited, indeed, much of that demoralisation which naturally flowed from a bad government and a worse religion. The highlanders, in great measure, lived by smuggling, and smuggling begot robbery. Thus there existed a very indifferent standard of political morality. But the Catalonians at the same time possessed the elements of a high national character. They were brave and patriotic; they loved, perhaps, peril for peril's sake; but they would have undergone any hardship for their country. From the time of the Romans, every bordering power had endeavoured, and had endeavoured in vain, to effect their extermination.

This traditionary warfare had perpetuated their ancient character; and they were still the same hardy mountaineers as when Christianity and Civilisation were unknown on the frontiers of the Pyrenees.

Their light yet robust physical forms, and their temperate and hard-working lives, contributed to bear out this character. They were possessed of a bodily strength and energy capable of undergoing almost incredible labour; and their intrepid spirit seemed to render peril and adventure the romance of life.

The new day's journey was designed to bring us to the village of Prullans, if not to Puicerda. Prudence, and the intricacy of the mountains, induced me to engage a second guide at my last halting-place. I was not actuated by the consideration that three heads were better than two, nor by the reflection that we should thus form a more imposing party against a contingent attack from the half-barbarous Eupatridæ, who were roaming over the mountains seeking what they might devour, and were just then more than usually gathered into marauding bands. The truth was, that I would have discharged him of Romandrin if I could, but I had engaged him

to Puicerda, and to Puicerda accordingly, whether I paid him or not, he would go, apparently because I wished to be without him. Obstinacy was his one mental gift: he knew nothing of his road: he had more than once misled us; and I believe nature had designed him for an irreclaimable idiot.

The continual proximity of a considerable band of mountaineers who were marching at a short distance ahead of us, and of whom we had ever and anon caught glimpes at different periods of the day, had induced us to slacken our pace, until it became impossible to reach our intended quarters during that evening. This band had so much the appearance of a marauding body that the guides were painfully apprehensive for their own safety, in the event of our gaining ground upon them. At length it became obvious that we must either push on or suffer ourselves to be benighted in a narrow and difficult pass. We proceeded accordingly at a quicker pace with a view of quartering ourselves in a hamlet consisting of a few huts, in the expectation that the roving Catalonians would leave it in their rear. More than once we had noticed that the march of this body was arrested, and that a portion of

the party had returned to an eminence commanding a view of the defile through which we were passing—a sure sign, as the guides thought, that we were watched.

Disregarding the omen, however, we reached the brow of the hill on which stood the hamlet described by one of the guides; and on demanding of a shepherd the course taken by the marauders, we learnt that they had, after stealing a march on us for the whole day, finally encamped themselves for the night in the cottages we had chosen for our abode. This brought us to a halt: my guides counselled immediate retreat: I proposed that we should pass boldly through them, and, if practicable, go on towards Puicerda. It was twilight, and the coming darkness rendered either alternative impossible. To increase the perplexity of our plans, the shepherd added that they were not then engaged in smuggling, and intimated that they were bandits. There were scarcely any political disturbances sufficient to call such a body together. What, then, was their object?

In advance of these huts a portion of the mountaineers had established themselves in a [redacted] which implied their disposition [redacted]

progress. The guide in advance now halted. I knew enough of their character to be convinced that irresolution would be fatal, and rode forward, directing the guides to follow, though with some apprehension that they would both turn tail, and leave me in the lurch. The suddenness of the movement left no time for their deliberation, and a Pyrenean guide is not the sort of animal to appreciate the saying of Corneille, that

"Le destin des états dépendait d'un moment."

They followed me accordingly, but reluctantly and apprehensively enough. Assuming, therefore, the show of great authority, where we were, in truth, cutting the most sorry figure imaginable, I rode through the body, who were armed with a few guns and a good many long knives, answering their demands, which might have been a call to surrender for all I could understand, with a wave of the hand and a look at my pistols. The only guide who had any sense followed next, and remembered my injunction to declare, if [illegible]estioned, with great dignity, that he was the [illegible] of Trenis. We thus effected our passage [illegible]arauding party had time for acting:

but as their appearance rendered it imprudent to halt in this little hamlet, we pushed on for another half a mile distant.

Here, as ill-luck would have it, we encountered the other division of the party. To rest ourselves and our horses was absolutely necessary. Aided by the darkness, we had effected a brilliant retreat from the first marauding division, at least equal (as I consoled myself at the moment) to that of Blücher upon Wavre. I was in no apprehension of being shot, stabbed, or (*à la mode Anglaise*) of having my throat cut, while I took ordinary precautions. My only fear was for the horses, who, I believed, would be stolen if discovered, either by force or fraud. The second marauding division were, fortunately as I at first thought, housed for the night. But I afterwards found that they had established themselves in the only dwelling, among the three or four which the village contained, in which there was anything to eat! Favoured, however, again by the darkness, we succeeded in putting up our horses in an indifferent stable, above which (in conformity with a custom very prevalent in Catalonia) was a small dwelling on the first floor, containing three or

four cabins which rejoiced in the euphonism of rooms. Here I at once engaged my night's quarters of the owner, who (originally under great apprehension for his own safety) was now terrified tenfold by the presence of our horses, which were likely to be the first object of the cupidity of the marauding mountaineers. He was able to give our horses each a feed, but had no provision for ourselves. Should we endure our hunger, or enter the den of the marauders, those happy monopolists of the "staff of life" in the village of Estura?

The remaining alternative was to turn Nebuchadnezzar at once, formally to recant the error of one's human existence, and solemnly avow oneself a graminivorous animal! I was unwilling to embrace so violent a conversion, against the convictions of nature and the force of habit. In spite, therefore, of the protestations of my host and my guides, I entered, followed by the latter. The marauders, bandits, or whatever they were, were some sleeping, some smoking, and some drinking. Our presence clearly roused them to a consciousness that there was plunder at hand; and during our stay under this roof, ominous whispers were interchanged at our expense,

which completely disarmed my two guides of their hitherto inexhaustible appetites. They had evidently no concert and no leader, or they would have made a demonstration before we left. Our retreat towards our castle was observed, and I could see that we were watched by several of the party. I took, therefore, a circuitous course, and afterwards found that, in doing so, I had undergone as great risk of my life at the hands of a precipice, as our supper had occasioned us at those of the banditti.

I directed each of the guides to sit up by turns, as a watch. If I had allowed them both to do so at the same time, I believe they would have had courage enough to have deserted me in the night, leaving their horses behind them. And yet the rascal whom I ordered to keep watch in the first instance slept so soundly, that I believe the Spaniards might have cut his throat without in the least degree disturbing the serenity of his dreams. They had, however, apparently surmised the existence of our horses; for, in the course of the night, I heard their footsteps around the building, and I believe that at one time we were completely surrounded.

Either through the darkness, their own misgivings, or the construction of the stable, which would have rendered the door nearly imperceptible in broad daylight, they failed to effect an entrance. I deliberated on the relative merits of a sortie and a negotiation, without having the means of arriving at any conclusion, and should at last have acted on the impulse of the moment. The dawn, however, at length disclosed that the way was clear; we emerged on our horses from the shepherd's dwelling, and the grey light of the morning found us on the road to Prullans.

I afterwards learnt that our position was carried by assault at sunrise, half-an-hour after we had abandoned it; that the shepherd had been robbed of what I had given him, and been obliged to confess, as the condition of his life, the course which we had taken. The exasperation of these campaigners found momentary vent in a pursuit of us, which, warm as would have been the reception they would have met, proved very unavailing. But I congratulated myself on the bold front we had shown to the enemy, then on the skilful retreat we had masked from their very dwelling, on the impregnable position we had

taken up for the night, and, finally, on stealing a morning's march upon them, which decided the fate of our campaign.

We reached and passed Prullans, and I soon found myself in the mountains of Spanish Cerdagne. Nothing had been more interesting or adventurous than my journey through Catalonia. I have not had the requisite space to record much of my intercourse with the mountain shepherds of this district of Spain, or to do more than express admiration of the general simplicity and generosity of their character. But I hold that neither books nor natural reflection can ever afford any man a really comprehensive view of the human character in all the developments with which an endless variety of social circumstances have invested it, until he has visited races such as these, and has seen shadowed forth in their simple lives and simple virtues the life and the virtue of a primitive antiquity. Very different from these were the people of the plain, debauched by the double evil of a vicious government and an immoral religion. Not less alien from the general character of the mountaineers were the marauding parties which I have described, and which, I believe (although my experience might, at first

sight, tend to a different conclusion), are gradually declining in the mountains.

As I passed along the frontier of the Republic, I found myself watched and suspected by every Spanish authority whom I encountered, an object of curiosity in the view of every peasant on my route; in fact, a moving wonder along the mountains. This suspicious predisposition of the authorities brought me into an amusing collision with the Alcalde of Isobol, a Spanish village on the Andorrian frontier. On my taking up my quarters in this place, my guide carried my passport to that distinguished functionary, announcing my intention of proceeding to Puicerda. To my surprise and indignation, the guide returned with the intelligence, that his Excellency had thought fit to retain my passport on the ground of an alleged inaccuracy in a police signature given at Tolosa, with an intimation that the inaccuracy in question must be rectified at that city before I could proceed on my journey.

Late as was the hour, I immediately proceeded to the dwelling of this barbarian in office, taking with me my guide against the contingency of my being at fault in his Spanish

dialect, but intending, in the event of my finding him more learned than his compeers, to pour upon him such a volley of French rhetoric, as should compel him altogether to withdraw from his position.

On my entering the room where many of his attendants or friends had apparently been drawn up with a view to the intimidation of a solitary traveller, he abruptly informed me that I had infringed not only his regulations, but those of all the Alcaldes along the frontier, and that I should go no farther. Cursing from my inmost heart the stupidity of the guide who had surrendered my passport into this barbarian's hands, I demanded of him indignantly upon what ground he had dared to impede and obstruct the journey of a loyal and faithful subject of her Britannic Majesty, the ally of Queen Isabella, under the displeasure of whose Government he would inevitably fall. I found that this method of assailing the bear in his den took the animal somewhat by surprise, and elicited a disposition to haul down his colours, if firmly pressed. He persisted, however, in repudiating the notion of my being a mere traveller for pleasure,—in fact, "a tourist." It was all very well for an English-

man, who had nothing but plains, and ditches, and civilisation in his own country, to pretend that he only wanted to roam among the shepherds and the mountains of the Pyrenees. The mountains, he said, had been there for a thousand years (I suppose he took me for a Methuselah in the last stage of senility!), and the shepherds had been there as long. There was nothing new in the Pyrenees, but there was always something new in politics; and every man on the frontier who had no ostensible business, was, in his view, a spy, a plotter, an intriguer, a political adventurer.

My Catalonian vocabulary began to break down; the barbarian, too, talked a patois as barbarous as himself, and I could not rely on the fidelity of my interpreter. I accordingly assailed him in French, which he very imperfectly understood; and having elicited his ostensible objection to my progress, consisting in the omission of some form in my passport which I had heard (though on very slight authority), that the Central Government had recently remitted—a point, however, which I entirely forget—I urged this circumstance, pointed triumphantly to the signatures of the French authorities, and drew such

a picture of the wrath which would be hurled upon his devoted head by the Duke of Victoria and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, till he began to consider his position a perilous one, which might involve the pleasing alternative of his being marched across the frontier by a French police force, or of being remitted in chains to the Balearic Isles. I very much doubt whether he understood more of what I said than the "*Duc de Victoria,*" and the "*Ministre des Affaires Etrangères;*" but these mighty words acted as talismans, serving to call up idealities of ministerial vengeance beyond what actual language might express. Finding the tables turned upon him (and himself, as he began to believe, the transgressor of the laws), he was unable to conceal his own serious apprehension, and I so worked upon his fears as to elicit a condign apology for the wrong, and a promise of every assistance on my route. Soon afterwards the Alcalde came to meet me as I was resuming my journey, and begged me to consider, that it would conduce to our common advantage, if I said nothing on the subject of this rencontre at Isobol. I acquiesced, on the condition of his endorsing the passport as "perfectly regular,"

thus concluding the negotiation by calling upon the official to eat his own words. I hope they did not seriously compromise his mental digestion; and the moral, gentle reader, of the story is, that where you are not altogether in the wrong, you should never give way to a factious official.

I now proceeded on my route, to exchange the wild mountains of Catalonia for the fair lands of Cerdagne and Roussillon.

CHAPTER X.

VISIT TO THE PEOPLE OF CERDAGNE AND ROUSSILLON; AND TO THEIR CELEBRATION OF THE MYSTERIES AND MORALITIES OF THE TROUVÈRES.

I FOUND myself at length among the singular people of Cerdagne and Roussillon. Next after the Republic of Andorre there existed no community, through the length and breadth of the Pyrenees, whom I was so desirous to visit. Neither the Basques, nor the Béarnais, nor the Cagots, appeared, in my view, to possess the romantic peculiarity displayed by the inhabitants of Roussillon and of Cerdagne. In Cerdagne and Roussillon—and in those territories alone—was still preserved and perpetuated, in its original character, the undeveloped imagination of mediæval Europe.

To this obscure corner of Europe, then, had gradually receded the celebration of the mysteries and moralities of the Trouvères, which laid the basis of the imaginative civilisation of a large part of Europe. That ancient system of dramatic representation, born of the zeal and the piety of the early Church after the restoration of social order, had given way to grander, truer, and more artistic principles. From Italy and from France those early dramas had generally disappeared with the close of the Middle Ages. And yet, five centuries after the age of Dante and of Chaucer—three hundred years after the Romantic Drama had been built up in the proud language of Castile—the primitive mysteries and moralities of the Langue d'Oil were still being remotely celebrated by the humble peasantry of Roussillon! Here, then, while the celebrity of Shakspeare and of Calderon had elsewhere grown old, I seemed to dwell in the fair perpetual dawn of imaginative Thought. Let those who would that they had dwelt in the days gone by, visit the people of Roussillon, of Andorre, and of Bearn.

I was once more alone, except in so far as

the presence of my guide might detract from solitary travel. At length I found myself at Puicerda, on the frontier of that which the Pyrenean treaty in 1659 declared, in violence to all natural and social rights, to be French territory. Here, then, is the boundary between French and Spanish Cerdagne, of the former of which Roussillon is, in some sense, a continuation. But both French Cerdagne and Roussillon are as essentially opposed, in the manners of their population, to anything that can be termed French character as the people of Spanish Cerdagne or of Catalonia itself. It is scarcely to be supposed that a population which retains the intellectual traditions of the Middle Ages in reference to the drama should become materially affected, in point of social character, by the stipulations of a treaty concluded within the last two centuries.

Next morning I left Puicerda on horseback with my guide; and a ride through Cerdagne brought us to Mont Louis, at a distance of some fifteen miles from Puicerda. Cerdagne may be best described as a central valley, forming the nucleus of an aggregation of lateral valleys which converge towards it. The ride is one of the most

delightful in the Pyrenees, the scenery of great beauty, and the soil of great fertility.

At Mont Louis I was to witness the performance of a mediæval mystery. I had been disappointed of this expectation at Saillagoussa, a village intervening between Puicerda and Mont Louis, and the most considerable place in French Cerdagne. Mont Louis is situated on the Roussillon frontier; and I am not sure if it be not in Roussillon itself. It is, indeed, little more than a village; but possesses a fortress built by Vauban, after the Treaty of Nimeguen, on a commanding table-land, although, probably, its strength may be very insignificant. The dramatic celebration, however, attracted the population from either side of the frontier.

The days chosen for these celebrations were Sundays and saints' days. In the former case the mystery related to some incident in the life of our Lord; in the latter to the labours of the respective saint. The celebration was, however, occasional, and the intervals more often of arbitrary length; except that, on the anniversary of the patron saint of the larger villages, the representation always related to his life or martyrdom.

It was with a feeling akin to an instinctive

conviction that I had relapsed into the mediæval world, that I went with my guide, after the church services were concluded, to the humble theatre in which the people of Cerdagne and Roussillon were wont to perpetuate the duties of the venerable Fraternity of the Passion! What a traditional illusion that that ancient society were extinct! They had simply withdrawn from the imitative genius of Paris to the fitter seclusion of the Eastern Pyrenees! Here, then, were to be exhumed from their imaginary sepulture that illustrious, dramatic, and sacerdotal brotherhood, who interwove the mysteries of our redemption with the art of the infant drama; and here, to be discovered in their lingering obscurity, those jolly old fellows, the Clerks of the Revels! Pregnant with comedy and with sacred tragedy as in the days of old, the Theatre of the Mysteries opened.

There was a considerable difference between this celebration and that of the Middle Ages, though it was not such a difference as to disturb their essential identity. In the first place, the Mysteries of Roussillon did not extend over the thirty or forty days which some of the Mediæval Mysteries comprehended. These plays

were usually concluded in a few hours. But as of old, the Fraternity of the Passion greatly circumscribed some of their celebrations, so, in Roussillon, on the other hand, longer representations were occasionally adjourned from Sunday to Sunday. Convenience, however, seldom suggested the celebration of the longer plays, which must have been destructive enough to scenic effect. Secondly, there was no such triple scaffold—representing Heaven, Earth, and Hell—in the Roussillon theatre, as in the time of the Trouvères. This confusion, however, and the indistinctness which it involved, might have resulted from the poverty of the actors. For if the spirit of the Fraternity survived, their incorporate rights had disappeared. I might mention some other immaterial variations.

The leading principles of the Roussillon drama appeared to be, first, that scenic representation should take place within the walls of a theatre, thus adopting the later, and discarding the earlier principle of the mediæval drama. Secondly, the representation generally took place by the light of day, more or less veiled or qualified according to the actor's taste and the character of the play. Thirdly, there could of course

be no unison recognised of the comic with the tragic element, in a drama portraying the Mystery of the Redemption. Comedy, again, was less frequently introduced as a distinct drama than in the middle ages. Fourthly (rather as a negative than as a positive principle), there was no aim at a conformity to the real character of the represented objects.

Thus, on entering the theatre, we took our seats upon a raised platform, devoted to the *élite* of Cerdagne and Roussillon, and vaguely representing the boxes of the Parisian theatres, for which we paid some eight or ten sous each. Below us, and intervening between the platform and the stage, were a number of benches and tables designed for the inferior orders of the community. The stage itself was raised to an elevation midway between the platform and the pit. The light of day was admitted with some such modification as exists in a Roman Catholic cathedral; this modification, however, proceeding, not from the subtle agency of painted glass, but from the more obvious device of coloured curtains. The triple universe of the early Mysteries was depicted partly on canvass and partly (an

unusual course, as I was informed, in Roussillon), by means of scaffolding. There was a sort of rustic orchestra: but the beauty of the Roussillon airs, which no one who has heard them will readily forget, would have given a new life to the theatres of Paris, of Vienna, or of Berlin.

Never was any drama a more complete practical protest against the doctrine of dramatic Unity of Place (except so far as scenic arrangement was concerned); for the play which was acted on the occasion of my visit began with the creation of the world; and after comprehending, in theory or in representation, the principal events of the first four thousand years, concluded with our Saviour's pilgrimage upon earth! Paradise was, by a figure of speech, the first scene of the first act. There were Adam and Eve, at first the solitary dramatis personæ,—then came the animals (by a gentle anachronism) "pawing to get free." Then came the tempting evil spirit, and finally the expelling and avenging angel. But, by a grotesque perversion, the former was represented by a fair woman, and the latter by a dark and bearded man, burnt apparently from immemorial time by the fierceness of a Roussillon sun. Such

was the fallen, and such the glorified angel, in illustration of the aphorism in the Bucolics,—

"Alba ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur!"

When, in process of time, the play arrived at the deluge, the voyage of the Ark was *supposed;* much as the triple voyage from Thessaly to Eubœa is supposed in the Trachiniæ. This, in fact, was a happy arrangement for the denizens of the pit, under the circumstance of the elevation of the stage and of the inconvenient laws of watery gravitation. Then came the pilgrimages of the Patriarchs,—then the Egyptian plagues; and a faint delineation of the swarms

"That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile."

The wanderings in the Desert followed; and the Jewish kingdom at length was presented upon the stage. The costume of the actors nearly killed one with laughing; and the grandest attire that was then common in Catalonia was held to be the presumptive fashion of ancient Jerusalem. The actors, too, were often wont

to adorn themselves with gilt buckles and gilt buttons; and they occasionally appeared with their hair powdered in a manner which would have rendered it a mercy to the drama if Mr. Pitt's hair-powder tax had extended to Cerdagne and Roussillon.

In the fulness of dramatic time, the events of our Saviour's pilgrimage were introduced upon the stage. The introduction of so sacred a subject must shock, at first sight at least, the notions of a Northern visitor. But there are some special considerations to be entertained, which scarcely justify, I think, our throwing the charge of profanity on the Mysteries. In the first place, the whole genius of the Romish religion is non-spiritual. Those who have seen the leaden and painful representations of the crucified Redeemer of mankind, fresh from the hands of some mercenary *ouvrier*, bowed-to, knelt-to, and rhapsodically kissed, with the devout fervour of hundreds of superstitious peasants, will be well able to conceive that a dramatic celebration, involving the representation of His person and His life, might be introduced without giving birth to any other feelings than those of seriousness, and wonder,

and religious enthusiasm. Moreover, this species of celebration is one to which the people of the district have been accustomed from their childhood. It is certain, again, that the principle in question was adopted throughout the age of Mediæval France without having any other object in view than the serious celebration of sacred subjects.

The drama concluded with the marriage at Cana. It had first shadowed forth some of the early events in the life of our Saviour which are not recorded by St. John; thus settling the chronological question in dispute among learned divines as to the priority of the miracle of Cana over other miraculous acts. It was a fitting close, however, for a play based on such principles (non-dramatic and void of historical perspective as they were); for the drama which had begun with the representation of the Fall, and of the Divine promise which that Fall had elicited, concluded with the event which the last evangelist has introduced as the first pledge of the fulfilment of that Divine promise by our Saviour to mankind.

During the representation of this part of the

drama, the attitude of the audience was uniformly serious and attentive. They had been too much habituated, indeed, to the solemnity of the design, to receive any part of the play with much positive demonstration. The drama, in fact, was, in point of design, uniformly tragic; but in point of execution there was often something by far too serio-comic to enable an Englishman to keep his countenance.

When the tragedy was over, however, it was succeeded by a comedy: and thus the old ghosts of the Clerks of the Revels came in to supplant the exiled spirits of the Fraternity of the Passion. This comedy was something between an ordinary comedy, an extravaganza, and a ballet. Like the early mediæval comedy, it embraced the representation of real characters, in those parts, at least, in which it aimed at a delineation of Nature. The acting evoked hilarity enough from all classes that were present; and it was clear that the same human nature that sought for comedy in the days of old as a relief to tragedy, was now readily relieving itself of the tedious seriousness which the length of the Mystery had demanded. It was impossible,

however, for a stranger to appreciate the zest of the representation. The source of the comedy was local; and was often too traditional to be known even by the native population otherwise than as a legendary story. Some mediæval invader of Cerdagne or Roussillon, put to flight by the population, and the theme of every species of buffoonery and jest, was not seldom the professed subject of the play. The comedy concluded, the audience began to disperse; and I emerged again into the light, through the then fading light, of modern days.

These dramatic celebrations are far from being the only peculiarities of the people of Cerdagne and Roussillon. Their superstitious and religious sentiments find vent in periodical processions, associated either with obscure traditions or with the evangelical history. And they have other customs which I cannot now linger to describe, of some of which I was a spectator, and of others a learner from the narrations of those around me. My visit to this territory was much curtailed; and I was compelled to leave this district of the Pyrenees before I had spent half the time I had desired to

pass among the people of Cerdagne and Roussillon. But there is much among the characteristics of that population, in addition to what I have related, which gives them a right to be visited by those who seek to understand and enter into the varieties of man's nature in the lands of the Pyrenees.

THE

REPUBLIC OF ANDORRE.

CHAPTER XI.

THE REPUBLIC OF ANDORRE.

I PROCEEDED, at length, to the Republic of Andorre,—a soil which had seldom, indeed scarcely ever, been trodden by the foot of an Englishman. The few of my countrymen, among past generations, who might have visited it, had none of them, so far as I was then aware, given to the world any description of the social condition or of the political institutions of this ancient commonwealth. The majority of the English people had, I was persuaded, seldom heard of its existence. And yet it was nearly the oldest of the States of Europe. It had maintained its independence, with little intermission, from a period long anterior to the Norman Conquest. It presented nearly the identical form of polity which had characterised its Government in the

days of Charlemagne and of Louis le Debonnair. And in the midst of prescriptive revolution among the surrounding nations it continued, beyond comparison of any other State, to be guided by conservative principles sanctioned by immemorial tradition.

I was naturally anxious, therefore, to visit a Republic invested with so singular a political constitution. I was desirous of ascertaining, by personal observation, in what degree an unexampled stability of government, combined with the enjoyment of a rational freedom, had served to atone for natural disadvantages of situation, and to raise the people who had lived under such a system to industry and wealth, and to the comforts and refinements of social life.

There are three ways of approaching the frontier of Andorre from Bagnères de Luchon. The first involves the long and mountainous ride of several days, which I have described on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees; and the traveller who adopts that wild and desolate route should force himself to the reluctant conclusion that the ordinary requirements of European travellers form simply the unnecessary refinements of conventional life. The second, which skirts

the French margin of the mountains, and passes through several considerable villages, brings you to the Baths of Ax, in Ariège, within fifteen miles of the territory of the Republic. The third, which, though the longest, is, perhaps, the most expeditious route, passes by way of Toulouse.

It was early on an October morning that I left Ax on horseback, along a stony and indifferent road; and a ride of three hours brought me to the Hospitalet, the last village on the French side of the frontier of Andorre. The stupidity of my guide, and the worthlessness of the horse he had provided me, rendered me glad to change both the one and the other at this place. The landlord of the rustic little inn, who was for the moment my host, offered to be at once my dragoman and interpreter among the Andorrians, who spoke a dialect differing very little from the Catalan. The arrival of an Englishman in that corner of the Pyrenees had created some curiosity in the neighbourhood. In the first place, I was incessantly assailed by gens-d'armes and douaniers, on the French side of the frontier; and my passport was examined as often as it had been in Hungary, and with

a vigilance and scrutiny which implied at least that the official understood English.

"You speak English, no doubt?" said I to the officer in French, and in a tone, perhaps, involuntarily sceptical.

"Pas beaucoup, Monsieur," replied the gend'armes, as he continued diligently perusing the document, which the royal insignia alone prevented him from holding upside down.

The reply seemed for the moment to extricate him from the double danger of involving himself in conversation in the stranger's tongue on the one hand, and of being convicted of imposture on the other. I soon, however, brought his pretensions to the test, by addressing him an observation in English so simple, that the least acquaintance with the language would have enabled him to comprehend it. He replied, unguardedly, that he did not understand the Catalan of Andorre.

After several irrelevant observations on the part of the official and the brethren of his trade, with reference to the consular signatures and several impertinent inquiries on the part of the douaniers regarding the contents of such of my luggage as I had ventured to transport into

Andorre, I finally procured horses; and, in the company of a new and more intelligent guide, soon passed the boundary which separated the great Empire from the insignificant but eternal Republic.

I address the following description of Andorre more especially to an English gentleman whom I met at Luchon, and who, if these sheets should ever fall under his eye, may recognise his identity in the anecdote I venture to relate of of him. He had set up for a great traveller, and for an amateur politician. My scheme of visiting Andorre encountered his violent ridicule. The notion, he told me, was preposterous. There could, he asserted, be nothing to see different from the adjacent territories of Spain and France. "You go to Monaco," he continued, "you see nothing distinguishable from the surrounding States; and yet you are told it is a Republic!" That he would have found nothing in Andorre sufficiently palpable to awaken his political sense, may, indeed, be true; for his visit to Monaco had not sufficed to inform him that that State was a Principality, and not a Republic.

I hope that the disposition of others to visit

this extraordinary little Commonwealth will rather be determined by the description, imperfect as it must necessarily be, which I shall now attempt to give of its social and political condition.

The first aspect of the country was unpromising enough. There was something, however, in the extremity of its wildness to attach a sombre idiosyncrasy even to its frontier lands. On either side was a waste wilderness, alternately of mountain and valley, clothed indeed with verdure, but without a tree, a human habitation, or a human being. It seemed as though we had passed not simply beyond the boundaries of civilisation, but beyond the very haunts of man himself. Our course lay along a narrow path, barely a foot in width, with a deep precipice beneath us, and a mountain rising vertically from the margin of the pathway. At this opportune conjuncture, the girths of my saddle snapped, the saddle instantaneously collapsed, and I fell with it on the verge of the precipice, at the mercy of the principle of gravitation. The danger escaped, and the saddle repaired, we proceeded on our journey, in spite of its ominous commencement. Hence our course led us into the valley, where, in a

region which partook partly of the character of an English quagmire, and partly of that of an Irish bog, almost every trace of the pathway disappeared.

Yet this was the highroad to the capital of the Republic! It was, relatively speaking, such a road as that which, by the gates of Versailles, possessed the signposts pointing to Flanders and to Spain! I soon discovered that this conservative and ancient commonwealth was a Republic without a road, without a house, without a river, without a trade, without a place of learning, without an educated person! Marvelling over its apparently dismal and universal nothingness, we proceeded on our way. The rain fell in torrents; and as there was no possibility of reaching the capital before midnight, it became a practical question of the moment to consider whether there were any halting-place by the way.

I interrogated my guide. "Soldeu," he said, "was the nearest village; we should reach it an hour before sunset."

I wished, if possible, to proceed farther.

"Canillo," he rejoined, "was two hours'

ride beyond Soldeu; but the accommodation was bad.

I had preconceived an indifference to the excellence of accommodation while in Andorre; and carelessly inquired, in answer, where a traveller could sleep there.

"*Avec les moutons,*" was the simple and pleasing reply.

Feeling somewhat confounded at such a definition of indifferent accommodation—and with a vague and unpleasant presentiment, that the extremes of good and bad accommodation in Andorre might simply oscillate between entomology and zoology in their worst characters—I inquired the name of the next village beyond Canillo.

"Encamp was an hour's ride from Canillo; we should reach it between eight and nine o'clock."

"Could we not proceed as far as Encamp?"

"Mon Dieu!" replied my guide, "we should in that case have two hours' ride in the dark: the road farther on was strewn with pieces of rock; it followed the course of precipices and ravines: and then, sacré nom du Diable! the country was plein de voleurs."

The information was discouraging. I disbelieved the existence of the robbers; but recognised the possible reality of the ravines.* I soon suspected that my guide had distorted facts with a view of inducing me to halt at Soldeu; but considering that our interests in respect of accommodation were identical, we ultimately stopped as we reached Soldeu, in that gloom of the evening which hangs over a mountain glen.

The village in question, though one of the principal country towns of Andorre, was simply an aggregation of straggling huts. The scenery, after we had crossed the mountains, became picturesque, and as we wound along the valley, grew beautiful and grand. But there was truly little in the architecture of man in sympathy with the sublime proportions of nature. The cottages, if I may so term them, were built both of granite and wood. There was nothing, however, habitable in their general aspect. Their windows, in which a rough unpainted board supplied the place at once of glass and of shutters, reminded me of the port-holes of a

* Scarcely any robberies, I believe, are committed within the territories of the Republic.

ship-of-war when filled with dead lights. Glass, indeed, was a rare luxury in the Republic. There was little, moreover, of the external appearance of cleanliness, which often marks the poorest English hamlet; and the pigs, who in the summer seemed to keep that watch in the village of which the bears relieved them in the winter, were continually introducing their curious noses at the open doors.

We dismounted at a dwelling somewhat better in appearance than the rest; and after leading our horses into a decent stable, and passing a formidable barricade of the *cochón* tribe, which had stationed itself at the house-door, finally entered. I cast involuntarily a retrospective thought on the table d'hôte at Bagnères de Luchon; but, making up my mind for a little more of pastoral simplicity, and a little austere republican self-denial, determined to make the best of everything around me. A long, low, white-washed room, without any other ceiling than such as was afforded by the floor overhead, with a glassless window at the extremity, opening upon a rudely-constructed balcony, which commanded the wild view of the glen, greeted my entrance. On one side

was the only bed-room of the village (!), reserved apparently for the chance visits of Republican grandees, and happily disengaged. An aperture, some two feet square, designed to admit the light of day, was closed imperfectly with a board, for the reason that it disdained the luxury of a window. On the other side was the rustic kitchen. Here, by the fireside, the inhabitants of the dwelling congregated while their supper was preparing. The fire consisted of logs of burning wood, scarcely raised above the ground, and encircled by two wooden benches, on which the party sat. There were no means, even in the day time, of admitting external light into this apartment. A lighted branch of pine served as a flambeau for its illumination; and a cauldron, suspended over the fire, contained the supper, which was usually served, after dark, to the chance visitors of my host. The provisions were very superior to the rest of the accommodations. A gigot, dressed with vegetables, cooked after the fashion of the commonwealth, and a bottle or two of indigenous wine, rejoiced the hearts of the party. We numbered some five or six at this banquet, in the large room of the house; while the matron and her children

supped elsewhere. In this manner, when the labours of the day were concluded, the hard-working people of Andorre loved to renew their social intercourse.

But I should mislead my readers if I were to characterise this description as applicable to all classes, notwithstanding their general approximation to a state of equality. It forms rather the better phase of Andorrian life. The mountain shepherds pass their days in a yet more primitive, as well as in a more secluded manner. They live chiefly in huts or cabins near the summit of the mountains. These, which seem the very personification of simplicity, are built of large stones raised one upon the other, without mortar or cement; like a work of chance, and admitting of a freedom and rapidity of ventilation between each at which Dr. Reid might marvel. These tenements have each a single opening, to which a door is seldom if ever attached; the constructor being indifferent to its comfort, and not apprehensive of human maraunders. He might, however, entertain more anxiety, lest his right of occupation should occasionally be disputed by a neighbouring bear. Here some two or three shepherds congregate

with the nightfall: here, by the fireside they range themselves on benches of stones for their frugal evening meal; and here, guarded by their dogs, and carelessly throwing a covering over them for the night, they sleep away the hours till aroused by the returning day.

I quitted Soldeu on horseback early in the morning, and proceeded to pay my respects to the Syndic, who was the President of the Republic, and was then rusticating at the village of Canillo. I inquired of my guide as to the hour of the day at which his Excellency might condescend to receive strangers.

"At all hours," was the reply.

"But he may not have breakfasted by the time we arrive at Canillo," said I, innocently thinking that he might regard himself as a man of too much personal pretension to be so unceremoniously disturbed by a stranger of an unknown race.

"That is of no consequence," repeated my guide.

"A vigilant guardian of the Commonwealth," thought I: "he never sleeps, he is always ready to receive strangers; and his breakfast is of no consequence!"

"At what hour," I inquired, "is he least occupied with the affairs of State?" as I could not help smiling at the idea of a pressure of public business upon the Administrator of Andorre.

"He is more occupied with his flocks than with political affairs," was the reply. "But, Monsieur," continued the guide, "in what language will you converse with him? He speaks only the Andorrian; but is always most happy to receive strangers."

I discovered, however, on my introduction to his Excellency, that he talked French fluently, though not, indeed, with a very Parisian accent; and that I had no need on the present occasion of transforming my guide into an interpreter.

CHAPTER XII.

VISIT TO THE SYNDIC (THE HEAD OF THE EXECUTIVE).

We rode on, and arrived at about seven in the morning at the country residence of the Andorrian Doge.

The Syndic was not at home: he was gone to church! We should either find him there, or engaged in a morning call at some house in the village.

It happened that his Excellency's devotions were concluded, and, in pursuance of the directions I had received, I ascended a flight of steps which formed neither a ladder nor a staircase, in the residence of a private member of the community, and finally entered a dark room, which appeared to enjoy no other light than that which proceeded from a fire of wood, and to possess no other furniture than a table

and a bench which encircled the hearth. On this bench two men were seated. One of them rose as I entered.

He was an intelligent-looking man, of about fifty-five; but with a dark and sun-burnt complexion. The expression of his eyes bespoke a kindliness of heart; his manner gave him a certain patriarchal air, dignified yet simple. He wore a vestment, which was neither a coat nor a jacket; knee-breeches; shoes and stockings of a rough manufacture; a something of blue which girded his waist, and might have been a twisted apron; and finally, a long pointed red cap, the extremity of which hung downwards to his shoulders. His dress differed little from that of the peasantry around him, which is not very dissimilar to the dress of the inhabitants of High Catalonia.

This was the Syndic—the Head of the Republic! He assured me of the satisfaction which it gave him to meet an Englishman: he had been Syndic, he told me, for seven years, and not one of my countrymen had visited his dominions during that period. He courteously proposed to conduct me to his house; and showed me, by the way, after we

had descended the rustic staircase, as fine a flock of sheep reared under the hereditary and unchanging customs of pastoral Andorre as ever was produced by the scientific farming of England.

His country residence was neither a granary nor a cottage,—nor, assuredly, a house. It would be difficult to discover any resemblance to it among the buildings of our own country. The Syndic led me upstairs to the principal apartment, which was, in a certain sense, spacious. He was drying his winter vegetables on his drawing-room floor! At the other end of the room a small carpet covered a section of the floor, and a cabinet appeared to be appropriated to the custody of documents of State. At the extremity of the apartment was a single window, which opened upon a balcony overlooking the beautiful valley below. This was his bureau: in this balcony all his affairs of State were transacted—audiences were granted—and documents signed—during the summer months. Here, also, was the great seal of the Republic, the sight of which for the first time convinced me that my host was not an impostor. We sat down to a breakfast to which his hospitality had invited

me, and he then began to inquire whether I was interested in the affairs of the Republic, and whether also I had brought fresh intelligence relating to the war in the East.

To the former question I answered in the affirmative, to the latter in the negative; simply qualifying the statement with the expression of a hope that we might soon hear of the fall of Sebastopol.

He had never heard, he said, of this place; and inquired for what it was remarkable? He was aware that the French and the Russians were at war, but did not know that the English had joined in the contest.

I endeavoured to divert the conversation to the politics of Andorre.

I began by complimenting him on the antiquity of the Republic, upon its political independence, upon its conservative traditions. I assured him of the interest which the British public would experience in the details of its government, its manners, and its customs; and that these had already so far interested me as to render me desirous of bringing them in some manner under their notice.

He replied that he should be happy to enter

upon the subject of home politics to a traveller like myself; but that, as a general rule, he endeavoured to banish it as much as possible from his mind when in the country. At Andorre, the capital, he was continually involved in political discussions with the Council.

The notion of his ever being precluded by the administrative cares of a capital no larger than a considerable French village, from the enjoyment of a country life, seemed a caricature of the longings of the poet:—

> "O rus, quando ego te aspiciam; quandoque licebit
> Nunc veterum libris, nunc somno, et inertibus horis,
> Dicere sollicitæ jucunda oblivia vitæ!"

I shall endeavour, in another chapter, to give the reader a succinct account of the political organisation of this Republic, a sketch of its political history, and a brief review of its condition and requirements. It will be enough for the present moment to observe, that the government of the territory in question is possessed exclusively by the landed class, who elect the Supreme Council; and that by that Council the Syndic is appointed and liable to be displaced at pleasure.

I urged respectfully on my host the para-

mount importance of effecting all of which Art would admit in favour of a state to which, if Nature had given much in some points of view, she had withheld, perhaps, more in others.

The Syndic replied that he thought Nature had been very bountiful to them in all respects; and that he doubted if the country were susceptible of improvement!

I observed that I thought the absence both of a sea-coast and of a navigable stream constituted a very great natural disadvantage; and that although the circumstance of the territory being girt with mountains conduced to its military strength, and had, perhaps, to this day formed the means of preserving its independence; it was, nevertheless, a considerable hindrance to international traffic.

My host replied, that the Andorrians possessed scarcely any such traffic; and that whatever were the produce of the country, they could never establish commercial intercourse with foreign states, in consequence of the tariffs imposed by the French and Spanish Governments, by whose frontiers their territory was entirely surrounded.

"Here, then," said I, "is an instance of one

of the natural disadvantages of which I spoke. Had you a sea-coast, you could export the tobacco from your plantations into England, and undersell the West Indian markets. You would find it a source of wealth, and England of advantage. But," I continued, "even supposing that the two Governments will not lower their exactions in favour of the produce which you now have to proffer them, have you by experiment and inquiry satisfied yourself that neither the labour nor the soil will yield you other commodities which either the French or the Spaniards will lower their restrictive tariffs to admit?"

The Syndic replied, that he could not say that all experiment and inquiry had been exhausted, or that, in fact, the attention of the Council had been directed to the point to which I had alluded; but that he did not believe that the country was capable of the development I had suggested; and that, even if it were so, the Andorrians would rather be losers than gainers by an exportation resulting from such a discovery, as they could barely produce at present sufficient to satisfy their necessary wants.

I could not help smiling at such a monstrous sophism. I answered that my argument had assumed either that they might produce more of

the same kind, by such inquiry and improvement, or some of a different kind. As regards the latter, as they had done without it altogether for a thousand years, they might do without it in part thenceforward. The progress of almost every country showed either the produce of new commodities, or the improvement and multiplication of the old, by artificial means. They might consume a portion, and export their surplus produce.

My host mused for a moment over the last suggestion. At length he replied, that he should regard it as a much safer policy, in the event of the industry of the country producing such a surplus in any commodity, to reserve the overplus against a year of scarcity. Such, at least, would be his conduct in respect of articles of necessity, such as corn and wool: in respect of such luxuries as tobacco, there would, of course, be no reason to restrict their exportation.

"I am glad to find," I rejoined, "that there is no such reciprocity of affection between Andorre and its tobacco as to render the latter a necessary in the eyes of your people. The plant grows abundantly here; but the Andorrians would, you think, continue to exist without it?"

"Well," he observed, drily, "they did once regard it as a necessary, perhaps; for when other crops had failed they used formerly to boil it for supper. They found it rather tough, I believe."

Under a vague and unpleasant apprehension that I might have partaken, perhaps, of this questionable luxury over-night at Soldeu, I endeavoured to dispose of the Syndic's last objection. "Suppose," I said, "that the produce of your own and the neighbouring countries differ, or, at least, that the cost of production in these countries is unequal, — would you not, in that case, be a gainer by relying upon the industry of France and Spain for what they can produce more cheaply than yourselves, and by exporting into those states that which your own labour will yield more cheaply than theirs?"

The Syndic at length confessed the force of the argument. He promised that the question should be brought under the notice of the Council at Andorre, in relation to the subject of the French and Spanish tariffs.

Correctly anticipating the answer I should receive, I inquired in what manner the Andorrians found a foreign market for their tobacco

under the commercial regulations of the surrounding states.

His Excellency replied with a wink and a shrug of his shoulders, which clearly implied that he did not believe in the divine authority of a foreign Minister of Finance. The country, in fact, was well adapted for smuggling; and the unfortunately prohibitive character of the duties imposed by the Governments of Paris and Madrid had left its population scarcely any other trade than contraband.

I have given to the reader at length, and as correctly as my memory would serve me, the simple conversation which took place between the Syndic and myself on this subject, inasmuch as it serves to illustrate the theoretical economy and the actual practice of the governing body of Andorre, in their agricultural and commercial affairs. The other authorities, with whom I subsequently had an opportunity of discussing the question, invariably assumed a similar position; and I soon perceived that any scientifically reforming policy was beyond the scope of their political vision. But did the evil arise from their exclusive and aristocratic form of polity? On the contrary, it was rather to be found in

the want of intelligence and energy than in the dominance of party interests. The introduction of the lower classes into the Council would probably have lessened its general intelligence, nor were there any men more laborious among the community than the masters of the soil. The landholders, moreover, were interested commensurately with the peasants in an extension of the national trade. The bane of the population was their ignorance, and it extended more or less strongly through every class. The poverty and isolation of their soil served to perpetuate their social seclusion, and their want of instruction and of books. Their leading men had scarcely ever received the benefits of an education at the Universities of France or Spain. With so many natural difficulties obstructing a successful reform; with a popular disposition, so laborious indeed in the routine of daily life, yet in respect of progress and of change so sluggish and inert, I parted for the present from my host, under the sorrowful conviction that there existed little hope of any material alleviation of the poverty of the people of Andorre.

Our pathway, as we parted from the Syndic at Canillo, and went onward towards the capital,

followed the course of the Embalyre, the principal mountain-stream which watered the soil of the Republic. The aspect of the country, as we proceeded towards the town of Andorre, had gradually undergone a complete transformation. In place of waste and trackless wildernesses we now pursued our way through a cultivated valley, increasing in beauty at every step as it carved its serpentine course through the sea of mountains by which it was encircled. Alternately the path descended to the banks of the stream, and mounted again the brow of the mighty hills by which it was overhung, threading its way through evergreen woods of box, the eye meanwhile pleased by the wild grandeur of the summit, as it contrasted with the picturesque beauty of the vale, and the ear soothed by the sweet cadence of innumerable cascades. It was the dominion of pastoral and agricultural man amid the realms of the chamois and the wolf, of the eagle and the bear.

There is a strange and exhilarating pleasure in penetrating into these novel scenes. The traveller alone knows the delight of setting forth with the dawn from the cottage or the hut, which is meanwhile his temporary home,

in the freshness of the morning, mountain air; and of watching the long shadows upon the hill-sides as they slowly contract with the advance of day, while he passes through regions as strange to his own eye as to that of his countrymen, and where the few human beings that he meets are alien from all that he had seen before in language, in ideas, in costume, and in modes of life. To embrace the pleasure of foreign travel through scenes romantic and almost unexplored, how cheerfully does he surrender the luxuries of a fairer civilisation! Readily will he subsist for a while on the rye-bread and the sour wine which this Sabine country yields. For my own part, I believe that there are no habits of life that arise out of the mere convention of the day which a week's change of society and scene has not the power to extinguish, and that even the labours of the peasant would seem but an insignificant transformation while still surrounded by the two great identities of Nature and Religion.

CHAPTER XIII.

VISIT TO THE CAPITAL OF THE REPUBLIC.

The continuation of our ride brought us at length to the city of Andorre, and I was anxious to observe the manners and the external aspect of the capital. It was clear that I should there see the Republic in its best phase, and acquire a knowledge of the highest point of civilisation which the people might have attained. I endeavoured to reduce my expectations to a sort of political zero, and so to guard against disappointment. I entered the town as the inhabitants were holding their noon-tide holiday in the street while the sun was in the zenith. Andorre was unquestionably superior to all the villages which I had yet visited within the valley, but it was still a

village. The inferior towns were rather its scattered hamlets. It contained but one building that would in France or England have aspired to the pretensions of a house. It was the residence of the greatest landholder in Andorre, and was regarded as the wonder of the commonwealth. The other buildings were barbarous constructions of wood and stone, consisting generally of two floors, and singularly deficient both in symmetry and design. The streets, or rather the lanes, which intersected the village, had apparently been devised after the building of the houses, in consequence of a sagacious after-thought which had dictated the desirability of a communication between house and house. As a natural consequence, they presented, at the distance of every few yards, a variety of angles, which would have at once delighted the heart of the mathematician, and have ensured the anathema of the tandem-driver. But in point of evenness of repair they were superior to those of Constantinople, of Smyrna, and of Pesth. I looked in vain, as we passed by these rude dwellings, for any habitation which might bear the external appearance of an asylum for travellers. My guide, however, at length halted

at the open door of a house apparently differing in no respect from those around it, and which he facetiously termed the Hôtel du Midi. We entered, and found a dinner for ourselves and a stable for our horses. The accommodation, Andorrian as it was, was such as might readily be endured by hungry travellers.

I sallied forth to pay my respects to the gentlemen engaged in the public administration, and to see the city, the church, the government-house, and, finally, the robes of state belonging to the great functionary whom I had left at Canillo, *studiis florentem ignobilis oti.* A number of men dressed in the rustic attire of the peasantry whom I had encountered on my journey, and colloquially engaged on benches in the great square—or rather the shapeless vacuity—of the capital, first attracted my notice. Were they aristocrats or peasants, patricians or plebeians?

The reader will have by this time regarded it as dangerous as myself to solve the problem by any of the rules which may hitherto have guided his reasoning upon such a subject. *They were both.* In such a commonwealth the very same individuals were often aristocrats and labourers,—in such a capital they were neces-

sarily at once citizens and peasants. Side by side, moreover, with the mere labourers of the field were sitting the councillors of the state. Where could I find so perfect an illustration in real life of that intangible and ideal excellence which has so long haunted the imagination of France under the names of Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité?

Seated among the rest was the son of the Deputy Syndic, to whom this scion of a noble house offered to introduce me. He proposed at the same time to show me the glories of the citadel. My guide, the proprietor of a farm and an auberge at the Hospitalet, had been the schoolfellow of this courteous and condescending young patrician, as I afterwards discovered, at some eminent seat of learning in Ariège or Catalonia, the name of which I do not recollect. The Deputy Syndic undertook the charge of government in the absence of his superior. Both he and his son spoke a species of Catalonian which I found myself generally able to comprehend.

We searched in vain for this eminent functionary at his residence: as fallaciously did we conjecture that he might be engaged at his

bureau of state: we finally discovered him in his cow-house! He conducted us to his habitation, which was scarcely superior to the country villa of the chief Syndic at Canillo, though surpassing it, perhaps, in point of accommodation. He very courteously offered us refreshments; but I felt assured that Andorre would afford nothing which could compensate for the want of the chibouque, the sherbet, and the coffee, which form the delight of a morning lounge on the divan of a Turkish Pasha.

The keys of the Palace, or Government-house, being at length discovered, after a final and despairing search, his Excellency announced his intention of showing me the lions of the place. The Palace was a rude, but very ancient building, constructed of rough pieces of granite, which might have formed the débris of a mountain land-slip. Here the grand Council met. On the ground-floor was the national prison. It was seldom occupied; partly, as it was said, in consequence of the inefficiency of the judicial system, but principally, as I afterwards had reason to believe, through the just and orderly character of the Andorrian people.

We ascended the staircase and entered the

great hall. This was the chamber in which the deliberations of the Council were conducted. It was a spacious room. A chair at one end was reserved for the Syndic, who sat as President of the Assembly. Seats or benches along either wall accommodated the four-and-twenty Councillors.

In another part of the hall was a cabinet, which contained the state papers of the Republic, and was fastened with six locks, having each of them different keys. These locks and keys corresponded to the six divisions of the nation, whose documents were deposited separately within the cabinet. To the executive officer of each division was entrusted a single key; and the cabinet having but one outer door, no portion of it could be opened, except in the presence of the six heads of the departments who were required to attend the deliberations of the Council.*

From the grand hall I was led to the robing-room of the Councillors, where his Excellency was pleased, for my amusement, to attire himself in the long, black, strait-collared coat, adorned

* I do not affect to state the nature of the subordinate officers with precision in this place; I shall speak of them more at length in the fifteenth chapter.

with two rows of buttons of brobdignagian dimensions, and the low, black, turned-up hat—something between an admiral's and a bishop's—which formed the official dress of his brethren in office. Thence we proceeded to the chapel, whither the governing body were wont to repair before they resumed the exercise of their administrative functions. It was decorated, not indeed with the usual profusion of the Roman Catholic Church, but in a manner which implied at least, that Andorre had done her best to adorn the altar of Christ.

I followed the sublime functionary downstairs, as he led me to the stable of the Councillors, which formed a prominent part of the building. Here was ample accommodation for the horses of the four-and-twenty country squires, of which they availed themselves, whenever they were summoned from their homes to attend the sittings at Andorre, which often lasted for several days. Thence I was conducted to the kitchen, an apartment which indicated that the dinners of the Councillors were, in their eyes, considerations of equal importance with their legislation and their worship. Enormous hearths, apparently designed for the roasting of whole sheep

and oxen; gigantic cauldrons, supported by massive iron bolts; stoves and other luxuries, altogether alien from the general simplicity of Andorre, formed the salient objects of notice. I now ceased to wonder at the insignificant results which had always attended the Parliamentary meetings of the Councillors! The contrast seemed ludicrous enough between the epicurean voluptuousness of their political aggregation, and the stoical simplicity of their private homes.

After thanking his Excellency for the civility he had shown me, and assuring him of the interest and cordiality with which Her Majesty's Ministers would receive him if he should ever visit London in the capacity of Representative of his country—a contingency which seemed, indeed, sufficiently remote—and readily accepting his obliging invitation to be present, on my return to Andorre, at the meeting of the Council which was then about to take place, I left the capital for San Julia de Loria, the *chef-lieu* of one of the six divisions of the Republic, and situated at its western extremity. From that place I hoped to make another excursion into Catalonia, and to visit Urgel, the seat of the Bishopric,

which still retained the shadow of its once feudal Protectorate over the Constitution of Andorre.

I was anxious to be present at one of the Religious Fêtes, which, although springing in some degree from the common genius of the Continental churches for the mingling of secular amusements with ecclesiastical ordinances, were peculiar, in their exact character, to the State of Andorre. These fêtes are held, like those of Béarn, in honour of some tutelary saint, on the day appointed by the calendar for the general celebration of his virtues or his martyrdom, and in wild and desolate spots, remote from human habitations, where a time-worn and deserted-looking chapel, erected as a shrine to the guardian of the Church, tells of an ancient superstition. It was matter of little consequence, I believe, whether the venerated patron were a red-letter or a black-letter saint; nor were the Andorrians very heedful of the question of his historical reality. Like the heroes of high antiquity, half mythical and half real, whom Fable so marvellously metamorphosed into constellations, the reputed Father of the Church underwent a similar transformation from

a legendary existence upon earth into a fervid firmament of ecclesiastical imagination. It happened fortunately that one of the ceremonies in question took place on the day upon which I left the town of Andorre—for it was a saint's day—and at a spot not far from the pathway leading to San Julia.

Thither accordingly I bent my steps.—Midway between the two villages of Andorre and San Julia, and after we had passed the golden and luxuriant vale in which the former was situated, the scenery grew desolate and grand. The pathway here completely amalgamated with the brook—a singular instance of fraternisation in physical geography, arising purely from the spirit of Republican institutions! Unhappily, however, our road was ascending with a steep inclination at the point of junction, and the stream, I need not say, was descending with proportionate force. The difficulty surmounted, we found ourselves on the brow of a hill, at the summit of which was the little chapel, dedicated to the saint who was for that day the object of Andorrian merriment and veneration. The wildness and seclusion of the scene seemed to fit it for the

celebration of the mysteries of an ancient and superstitious mythology. There one might fancy that the priests of such a religious system had congregated in olden time for the performance of rites too sacred for the public gaze.

As we approached, it became clear that it was with very different feelings that the people of Andorre went to worship the saint. The religious part of the ceremony, which seemed but the formal inauguration of the amusements that succeeded, was apparently concluded: His Eminence's votaries were emerging from the chapel, whose deserted appearance implied that its floors were seldom trodden by the foot of man; and the sound of the horn and the tambourine announced that the merriment had begun. The young and the old of either sex were soon scattered in groups over the grass, the former playing at a variety of games, in which here and there the latter joined. At length peals of musketry announced the commencement of a general dance. It was a gala day, in honour of which the women of Andorre dressed themselves in the gayest attire of which their mode of life admitted. The whole heart and soul of the juvenile population seemed to

be embarked in the festivity. The Andorrian women did not, however, dance with the grace of those of Arragon, or even of Catalonia; nor did the dances themselves possess the same flexibility and ease. But they seem venerable as having been handed down unchanged for many centuries; and it is a singular illustration of the length to which the Councillors of Andorre carry their love of the antique, that these gentlemen will not allow of the introduction of the modernised dances of Spain, in place of those which they continue to encourage as a good old conservative custom.

Refreshments and dances alternately succeeded. The nimble-footed peasantry of Andorre were in no humour to content themselves with the *eau-sucré* which forms one of the questionable refinements of French life. Spiced meat and Spanish wine were more grateful to their feelings, as well, at that moment, as to my own. The Spanish wine, moreover, which is drunk in that part of the Pyrenees, possesses an insidious strength, through which the peasantry of Andorre are very liable on these occasions, to use the expression of their fellows in England, to be "overtaken" on their journey

home. Its strength added to the hilarity of the religious celebration, and I may truly say, that I never saw a festival sustained with greater spirit.

At length I found myself at San Julia, the emporium of Andorrian commerce. It was the only village of the Republic which pretended to a civilised interchange of goods. A little colony of four or five adventurous Frenchmen, who were regarded by the patriarchal landowners of Andorre as dangerous and daring innovators, had introduced their own commercial system into the Republican territory. Their dress, which corresponded to that of their more respectable fellow-countrymen, rendered them objects of astonishment and admiration to the Andorrian peasantry. It seemed a question, indeed, whether, in so conservative a territory, it might not be deemed a political offence to take the entire shine out of the Syndic and his Councillors. These gentlemen styled themselves *négociants*; and were it not for the painful influence of occasional visits to Barcelona and Toulouse, each would, I believe, have fancied himself a Baring or a Rothschild. In every other point of view, however, than their modern attire, they

reminded me of the merchant-pedlars of the middle ages; and the reader may form a tolerably correct idea of their character, if he recollect the disguise in which Sir Walter Scott clothes Lord Oxford and young De Vere in *Anne of Geierstein.*

I was very courteously received by these mercantile colonists, to one of whom I had brought an introduction from the correspondent of Messrs. Coutts at Toulouse. They explained to me the nature of their employments, which appeared to consist in an importation of material for clothing, and an export of the few articles for which they might find a market beyond the frontier. They seemed to fancy themselves the lungs of the Republic, without whose intervention the State could not subsist, in spite of the staggering fact that thirty generations of independent Andorrians had managed to exist without the services of foreign residents.

The insignificant manufactures of the country necessitated a certain amount of import manufactured trade, while they scarcely admitted of any other exports than in raw material. Iron and wool were the only two substances which the Andorrians submitted to a manufacturing process.

There were several forges in the different districts, which were the property of the landowners; and the chief of them was situated at Urdiño, on the northern boundary. But with an abundance of mineral, and a powerful fall of water, the owners could scarcely work iron enough to satisfy the wants of the population, and the implements they constructed were too rude to find a sale in any other country than Otaheite. Iron, nevertheless, formed the principal manufacturing trade of the Andorrians. The extensive flocks of the landowners had suggested also to their ingenious minds the possible transformation of wool into cloth. So cheaply was this commodity to be had, that the peasants could afford to wear their cloth jackets, as well as the lords. Its texture was, however, supernaturally coarse; and when in reply to the inquiry of a landowner at San Julia, as to what I might pay for a cloth coat in England, I mentioned a hundred or a hundred and twenty francs, I thought the poor man's nerves would never have recovered the shock.

The ride from Andorre, and the religious festival, had beguiled the daylight hours, and it became necessary to pass the night at San Julia. The Consul of that place, on whom the name

of the great Syndic had operated like a talisman, came forward in a very courteous manner to offer me any accommodation in his power. I had, in fact, been presented at the Andorrian Court, and had enjoyed the special advantage of a presentation, without ceremony, at his Excellency's country-seat. My acquaintance with the head of the Republic seemed to entitle me to as great consideration as I could have desired had I been the bearer of diplomatic credentials from Lord Clarendon. I preferred, however, to secure the regular accommodation of the village, whatever it might be, than to avail myself of the unnecessary hospitality of a benevolent stranger.

We spent the evening at the dwelling of the Consul:* the French *négociants*, the Consul, my guide, and myself, forming the party, and it passed convivially enough. The Consul talked Catalan and sheep-shearing, the *négociants* bad French and worse political economy. The only point of unity amongst us, under the varieties of language and of ideas, was the vin d'Espagne. Under its genial influence the hours of evening

* I shall explain in the next chapter the Consular form of Government existing in the Republic.

slipped away; and I sought at length my nocturnal quarters, which it was quite an enterprise to discover, amid narrow passages that shunned the gleam of the stars, and stones and pitfalls casually revealed by the light of the glow-worm. These quarters, indeed, were rustic enough; but fatigue, like hunger, is the imperial luxury of Nature; and they both, in their different ways, transcend the grandest triumphs of upholsterers and cooks!

The early morning saw us on the road to Urgel. The beauty of the Andorrian valleys, as we approached the western frontier, had been progressive; and at that point their beauty culminated. I had done well in selecting the route by which I had journeyed. The beautiful cascade of Auvina now terminated the fair land of political freedom. A more delicious breeze than any that had fanned the heat of day in other dells of the Pyrenees, now floated through the valleys of Andorre.

This cascade is one of the most curious and beautiful in the Pyrenees. It does not consist, however, like that in the Cirque de Gavarnie, of an uninterrupted cataract. But though formed

of a succession of falls, it is far more picturesque, and at least equally grand. The mere altitude of a fall imparts, I think, very little either of sublimity or beauty. Proportion requires a corresponding breadth, or volume of water. And thus the broad cascade of Schaffhausen, though insignificant enough in point of depth, is far more imposing than that of Gavarnie, which measures a thousand feet. Auvina gained additional beauty from the pines and birches which surrounded its torrent of waters, as they fell, even in the autumn months, plentifully into the plain. The intense verdure of the fields seemed nourished by the very proximity of the cascades. Between each fall, the waters gathered themselves into fountains, coloured with the hue of sapphire, and clear as spars of crystal. These fountains were formed of blocks of marble and granite, which from time to time had fallen from the heights above, and were of every variety of colour.

As we passed onward toward the Catalonian frontier my guide related to me the legend of Auvina. In the Middle Ages the Bishops of Urgel had arrogated to themselves a supremacy

over the Republic, in which their successors still retained a nominal Protectorate. The claims of ecclesiastical ascendancy had long been thrown into collision with the spirit of Andorrian independence. The exactions of the See of Urgel had grown more and more intolerable. Meanwhile a lady, called from her dress and appearance the White Lady, became possessed, in right of her father, of an old tower on the heights above the Cascade of Auvina, and commanding the road leading from Urgel to San Julia. Certain magical powers were attributed to the owners of this ancient building; and the White Lady was accordingly supposed to be skilled in the black arts. The tower had originally been built as a bulwark against the irruptions of the feudal prelates of Urgel; and on this account, as well as on that of the dark gifts with which it was thought to be endowed, the lords of the Tower of Auvina were often popularly regarded as the guardians of the Republic.

The White Lady had more than once forbidden the entry of the Bishop into Andorre. He, nevertheless, came and went. At length, one night on his return towards Urgel, the White

Lady stood before him in the moonlight glade, beside the falls of Auvina, and beckoning him away from his attendants, he followed her, spell-bound and alone, to the edge of the woods. He returned at length with an altered countenance, but refused to divulge what he had seen or heard. For a long time he ventured not again to pass the Cascade of Auvina. His priests undertook missions in his stead, and each time, at whatever hour of day or evening they might pass, the White Lady stood before their path. At length, however, she was more rarely seen; and the Prelate of Urgel dared once more to cross the threshold of Andorre. They were no longer troublous times, and he undertook the journey unattended. He was never seen again; nor did the White Lady again visit the cascade or inhabit the tower. From this time forward a solitary wolf infested the region of Auvina, and devoured all the sheep that came within his reach. The simultaneous disappearance of the enchantress and the Bishop gave a mysterious character to the place. The Andorrians went forth, from time to time, to shoot the depredator on their flocks; but in vain. At length, the Syndic went himself in search for him, and

succeeded in killing the marauder. But ever afterwards, night after night, he became subject to frightful dreams and visions, which lasted while the sun was down. His health soon began to fail, but the visions did not intermit. As it became evident that his hours were numbered, the White Lady appeared before him; his attendants implored the exercise of her magic to effect the Syndic's cure. "I could deliver the Republic," she said; "but I could not deliver thee, from the power of the Bishop: the wolf that thou killedst was even he."—The Syndic died, nor was the White Lady ever seen again. From that period the Bishops of Urgel never attempted to invade the rights of the Republic. The moral of the legend, that even prelates should not covet their neighbours' rights, seems to be remembered in the land of Andorre, however it may be forgotten in that of Urgel.

CHAPTER XIV.

VISIT TO THE PRELATE AND CHURCH OF URGEL, AND TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF ANDORRE.

A VISIT to the Republic of Andorre, which had not extended to the See of Urgel, would have been imperfect. The bishops of that city, although their cathedral was situated beyond the frontier, had formerly exercised, as I have already observed, a *suzeraineté* over the Republic. They still continued, in conjunction with the French Government, to enjoy a nominal Protectorate of its independence. And they were possessed *de facto* of the ecclesiastical authority over the priests and churches of the Commonwealth. The constitution of Andorre had not very nicely defined the relations of Church and State; nor was the intellect of the Viguiers, or adminis-

trators of justice, very often taxed, I suspect, with any subtle theories either of actual law or of jural right. The arms of Urgel were exhibited, indeed, within the Republican shield; but the bishops, with the exception of the merely formal exercise of one or two civil rights, to which I shall afterwards allude, were regarded in a political point of view as virtually defunct as the Counts of Foix, with whose arms those of Urgel were still quartered. Like our parliamentary phrase, *le roi le veut*, this shadowy representation of feudal bishops and of feudal counts served to remind the people of Andorre, to use the words of an old English writer, "that their liberties had once been invaded." In practice, the Councillors of Andorre, while they preserved their legislative superiority, and acknowledged the ecclesiastical rights of the See of Urgel, jealously watched and rigorously curtailed the civil influence of the ministers of the Church.

The town, or rather the city, of Urgel, by no means satisfied my expectations of a place which had absorbed so considerable a share of the historical celebrity of Catalonia. The glowing

descriptions which the Andorrians had given me of its military fortifications would have led me, had I only been in a mood of corresponding credulity, to expect a more imposing sight than had greeted my eyes at Gibraltar or at Königstein. The city, however, proved to be surrounded by a low and dilapidated wall, alternately of shapeless stones and more shapeless mud, which a body of militiamen, without the aid of artillery, might have stormed. The houses were singularly constructed: the upper floors covered double the area of the floor beneath, and rested upon rows of pillars, which formed rustic arcades, and trenched somewhat inconveniently upon the natural dimensions of the streets. The aspect of the whole was equal, perhaps, to that of the best of the Andorrian towns, and the place was, moreover, of considerably greater extent. It contained several churches; but with the exception of the cathedral, they were scarcely more imposing than those of the Republic.

On reaching Urgel, I paid my respects to the Bishop, with a view of gaining a further insight into the working of the Spanish ecclesias-

tical system. The prelate received me in a very civil manner; but his physiognomy was stern, sinister, and, in fact, altogether diabolical. He was, perhaps, not more than fifty years of age, allowance being made for the influence of Pyrenean suns upon his face, and Pyrenean wines upon his liver. The expression of his eye was truly *à la Romaine;* in other words, it was singularly allied to that of the hyena. He had the air of a man who laboured under the unfortunate conviction that his enemies were ever on the alert; that there were fresh books of secular instruction to be burnt, or fresh souls to be placed in bondage. He had never before seen an Englishman, but he had heard of England and of her religious opinions. He concluded that I was a heretic: on my rejecting, however, the imputation he had thrown out, he charitably expressed a hope that I might be simply an infidel, which he regarded as by far the most hopeful, and by far the least heterodox condition of the two.

A Spanish ecclesiastical logician would have dilated on the difference between positive and

negative heresy, and thence have proceeded to prove the inevitable condemnation of the schismatic, and the possible, or even probable salvation of the atheist. But the Bishop of Urgel was accustomed to no such reasoning. It was his opinion: therefore it was the opinion of the Catholic Church: and therefore it was truth. He might have constructed such a syllogism as this; but no farther could he go.

The Prelate answered my inquiry as to the system of his diocesan government, by conducting me to the adjacent ecclesiastical seminary, which was, in fact, a small manufactory of priests, who there underwent a gradual process of transformation from the raw material of Catalonian clowns. My visit to the seminary did not, however, afford me any further solution of my inquiry than the interesting assurance, that priests were manufactured at Urgel. There were five or six dense and dirty-looking young men in this chrysalis state. The Bishop regarded the notion of their instruction in Greek as absolute pedantry; and their acquaintance with Latin was

probably equal to that which in England is ordinarily communicated to an apothecary's boy. These were the young recruits that supplied the churches of Andorre and of the adjacent district of Catalonia.

I spoke in praise of the free, yet conservative, institutions of the Republic. My sentiments, however, as I divined by the changing physiognomy of the Bishop before they were completely enunciated, were far from being congenial to the Lord of Urgel. The Prelate considered that the Andorrians were following a very wayward course, and that the policy of the Council was irreverently directed to the alienation of the people from the episcopal see. I turned the conversation to the operation of the Church in Spain; but his lordship could find no greater solace in a contemplation of the Spanish than of the Andorrian side of the frontier. In his view, the movement of the age was all in the wrong direction. Having ascertained the nature of his opinions, I took a pleasure in addressing some observation to him which I felt sure would be peculiarly

mal à propos, and proceeded accordingly to congratulate him on the effective union of State and Church in the Spanish dominions.

The Bishop replied, that the measure to which I had adverted would work the ruin of the Catholic Church; that the Church would soon become absorbed in the State; and that the bishops would be possessed of no more ecclesiastical authority than a cardinal's *laquais!*

This was, indeed, an appalling picture; and I endeavoured to soothe the apprehensions of the Prelate, by appealing to the beneficial influence of the principle in question in England.

He abruptly answered, with bad reasoning and worse chronology, that in England the union of State and Church had worked the heretical alienation of the people from the Holy Roman See; and proceeded to illustrate his knowledge of our character by an inquiry as to whether we had any Universities or any books!

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The portrait which I have endeavoured to draw of the Bishop of Urgel will be found, I believe, very fairly to depict the general cha-

racter of the elder generation, now nearly extinct, of the Spanish hierarchy. Those dignitaries, indeed, were, I believe, for the most part, more courteous in their manners, but scarcely less bigoted in their opinions. In point of learning and acquirements, they seldom possessed any great superiority over the ordinary priests.

My visit enabled me to compare the civilization of Andorre with that of this district of Catalonia. My conclusions, most dispassionately drawn, were strongly in favour of the Republic. Nature had lavished upon the great valley of Urgel the principal elements of agricultural wealth. The valleys were far wider than those of Andorre, their soil was amazingly fertile, and was watered by numerous mountain streams which intersected the low ground and ran into the river Sègre, which pursued its course between the mountains. But the stupid Catalonians had taken no measures to prevent the vernal overflow of these streams from inundating the plain; and the Sègre was permitted periodically to devastate the valley, and change its bed according to the caprices of the storms.

The Catalonian people, though naturally industrious, seemed to trust to the ravens to feed them, and contented themselves, while the overflow continued, with throwing slender bridges over the expanded stream, which the force of the torrent perpetually washed away.

Even the means of communication from place to place were inferior to those of Andorre. The paths were narrower, and seemed as though they had been constructed by the goats for their own peculiar use. In these paths it was generally impossible for two horses to meet, and not unfrequently their width gave a very insecure footing to a single mule along the edge of a precipice. There seemed to be no disposition on the part either of the Government or the peasantry to amend the condition of the country. The length of the civil wars had at once disorganised the country, and crippled the resources of the Central Administration. The Government, in fact, had neither money, energy, nor system. The same lamentable events which had operated so fatally on the character of the Executive, had worked simultaneously the

demoralisation of large classes of the people of Catalonia. Under the guise of political opinions they carried on, from time to time, a nominally guerilla warfare, which consisted, in fact, of a career of depredation on their peaceful neighbours. The misgovernment of the Church, which had debarred the people at once from secular and true moral education, completed the forlorn picture of the Catalonian peasant. A great portion of the population passed, indeed, in spite of these hostile influences, a life of pacific industry. But many, again, controlled neither by the arm of the law, nor by an inward sense of right, nor by respect for existing institutions and existing customs, had no other principle, now that the influence of the priesthood had been shaken, but impulse for their guidance. The character of these individuals determined, in great measure, the aspect and condition of the country. Under the guidance of some enterprising profligates, more clever than the rest, who inflamed them with false notions of their rights, they endangered the general security and arrested the progress of the population. Such was the condition of this

part of Catalonia: very different was that of Andorre.

In the land of the Republic the arts had probably undergone no very considerable development since the age of Charlemagne; and its superiority over Catalonia proceeded rather from the influence of political stability and social order. That there were no carriages in that State or in the proximate district of Catalonia, was an inevitable consequence of the absence of roads.* To obviate this difficulty, the Andorrians had contrived large quadrangular baskets, formed of spars of wood, and measuring some eight feet in length and some five feet in breadth, which they fastened upon the backs of their horses, and in this manner conveyed the produce of the soil to its destination. The width of this machinery not unfrequently obstructed the highway; but the necessity of the public was

* The author of the "Handbook for Spain" asserts, that "beyond Söldeu the road through the Republic is *carriageable*." Surely this author can never have visited the Republic of Andorre.

a more cogent consideration than the convenience of the traveller.

Horses were thus one of the most valuable and indispensable possessions of the people. Enviable monopolists, their backs enjoyed the exclusive carrying-trade of the Republic! In Andorre, as I have already said, there were neither navigable streams nor mechanical land conveyances, while there were no other beasts of burden. I do not remember having seen a cow or an ox in the whole State. The herds of Andorre must, at any rate, have been very insignificant. The great number of horses served, however, to compensate for this deficiency, so far at least as oxen might partake of the character of inconsumable goods. The bears, which the peasants often succeeded in killing during the winter, admirably discharged their consumable functions, and were served for the suppers of the proprietors as a hard and coarse species of beef; or, in other words, as *bœuf à l'Andorrane.*

A nearly equal portion of the wealth of Andorre consisted in its flocks of sheep. Each

landowner, as a sort of miniature patriarch, was possessed of a considerable flock, and seemed to enjoy the attributes at once of a nomad and territorial grandee. The price of a sheep ranged from twelve to twenty francs: even the lowest sum would purchase as fine a one as I have often seen in England; and mutton, after allowing for the difference in the value of money between this country and Andorre, was far from being an expensive subject of consumption. The fleeces of these animals, as I observed in the last chapter, served to clothe the whole of the male population.

The pigs formed the third animal estate of the realm. Each of the peasantry, like the Servians and the Irish, generally possessed one or two of these animals, but they were never suffered, as in Ireland, and, as I grieve to add, sometimes in Servia also, to take up their quarters in their masters' habitations. Goats and fowls formed, I believe, the only remaining domesticated possessions of the Andorrians. The mountain streams supplied an abundance of trout; pheasants were plentiful on the hill-sides;

and the izard and the ibex were numerous on the heights. As a set-off against these advantages, the country was subjected to the depredations of the bear and the wolf.

The wealth of Andorre was nearly equally divided between the agricultural and the pastoral. The richer valleys were sown with corn, and they were of a fertility of which the plains of France could furnish no example. They yielded wheat, barley, and rye; the former crop supplying bread for the landowners, and the latter for the peasantry. Indian corn was seen occasionally waving over the other produce of the soil; but maize did not seem usually substantial enough to satisfy the Republican appetites. Tobacco and hemp grew also in great profusion; and the former product served to sustain an extensive smuggling trade into Spain as well as France. The chocolate, or cacao-nut tree, is also cultivated in the western communes; and the introduction of this plant is, perhaps, the only instance in which the Andorrians have derived benefit from the Spanish discoveries in America. There are few more beautiful fruit-trees: it is

more graceful than the olive or the fig. The purple nut, larger than the largest pear, hanging like a pomegranate among the broad and pointed leaves, has, I think, a more picturesque effect than the wild luxuriance of all the fruits of the Minor Asia. Grapes, figs, dates, and olives, grow also on the warmer hill-sides in the neighbourhood of Auvina, and shower an Ægean profusion on the soil.

The social condition of the Andorrians seems calculated to hand down without improvement, and at the same time to preserve without deterioration, the existing riches of the land. The influence of the Church exhibits that beneficial character which it will invariably assume, where the ambition of ecclesiastics is controlled by the Civil Power, and the popular mind is educated in the simplicity of pastoral life. The infidel predilections of Navarre are as alien to the character of this people as the social injustice and violence of Catalonia. The Andorrians, I may confidently state, believed generally the religion which they professed, and appeared, more nearly than any other people that I have ever visited, to

carry out its precepts. They indulged in few theories, and in no controversies of theology: their faith was simple, but sincere. They regarded their ecclesiastical superiors with respect, but not with superstition: and those superiors appeared content with the exercise of a moderate influence over their flocks. I have dwelt upon this phase of the popular character of Andorre, because it exhibits a strong moral idiosyncrasy, in answer to the opinion which might be entertained, perhaps, on the part of some of my readers, that an insignificant people, surrounded by two great empires, could scarcely differ from their neighbours in any other circumstances than the mere empty forms of external government.

I need scarcely observe, that the Andorrians, like other pastoral races, were very indifferent to the advantages of education. In each considerable village, indeed, a school had been established for the gratuitous instruction of the rising generation; and in one or two of them the first elements of Latin were communicated either to those who were designed for the ser-

vice of the Church, or whose hereditary position, had destined them to the government of the State. But the majority of the community could neither read nor write; and I believe that the inefficiency of the schools in this respect arose rather from their partial than their defective operation. The women were generally worse instructed than the men; not, indeed, as a Turk would have it, that, in the opinion of their masters, they had no souls, but that they were indifferent to an education which would not materially promote the duties of their lives.

I should characterise the Andorrian women as gentle, industrious, and honest; French in the obliging civility of their manners, and Spanish in physiognomy and complexion. It is a peculiarity of their social constitution, that all the women of the same household live with one another on terms apparently of perfect equality, so that it is generally difficult to distinguish the mistress from the servant, whatever may have been the original difference of their condition. Every wife appears to regard her husband as her master,

and to look up to him with a Turkish appreciation of his moral superiority.*

The sociability and benevolence of the Andorrians are among their leading characteristics. In their domestic life, they know of few distinctions of rank. The stranger, and the poor inhabitant of the valley, are similarly received into the houses of the land-owner, admitted to the same fireside, and to the same repast, and furnished with shelter for the night. The political refugees of Spain and France, when forced to seek an asylum within the neutral territory, are invariably received with kindness and hospitality, but without inquisitiveness or curiosity. The privations of the poorer classes, and their sufferings in winter, are great; but these inevitable evils are mitigated by the active benevolence of the rich, which serves to perpetuate sentiments of reciprocal confidence and good-will. The condition of the mountaineers was, of all others, the most miserable and forlorn: they were shorn

* These peculiarities apply in a far higher degree to the Andorrians than to the Spaniards.

of the most essential comforts, while they were exposed to the most imminent dangers. Living in the dwellings which I have described in a former chapter, they were not seldom carried away by the storms of winter, or lost in wildernesses of mountain snow. But danger did not serve to diminish the national ardour for the chase; and the pursuit of the bear or the wolf, of the bouquetin or the izard, formed the most inspiriting sport of the whole population of the country.

In this land of poverty and labour, the people were remarkable for their longevity. Men and women often lived to the age of a century. The air of Andorre struck me as peculiarly invigorating; but the character of the people pointed also strongly to the conclusion that labour and frugality were the true elixir that had been sought by men of old for the lengthening of human life.

While I was thus occupied with an inquiry into the subjects to which I have here adverted, I found myself once more in the capital of

Andorre. I had returned thither in pursuance of an invitation which I had received from my friend the Syndic, to attend the General Council of the Republic, which had been convened with a view to an adjudication of important questions which had arisen in consequence of the general disturbances that had transpired in Spain; also, as I was informed, in regard to some of the fiscal and administrative reforms, which I had urged upon the consideration of the Syndic. To tell the truth, I felt somewhat alarmed at the position in which I found that I had placed myself. I had quitted England for my health: my sojourn had been more with Nature than with Man; and the last view that I could have contemplated in leaving my own country would have been that of political propagandism. A private individual, I suddenly found myself the reformer of a conservative and ancient State. I had propounded to its Government modern doctrines of finance, at some of which Adam Smith might have stood aghast; and the Republic was still regulated by the fiscal axioms which had passed current in the age of Charlemagne! The Assembly, I

ventured to hope, might entertain conflicting opinions towards the stranger who had wandered into their territory: there were some, at least, I entertained the comfortable conviction, who would regard me as a reckless innovator, if not a gratuitous impostor; and there were others, I trusted, who by a happy geographical delusion would suppose for once that the wise men came from the North. To my surprise, however, I found myself received with the greatest possible courtesy by the whole legislative body. I was introduced to the Assembly by the Deputy Syndic; and in the hall, to which I have elsewhere alluded, I found the twenty-four Councillors seated on their benches, and the Syndic himself on a singular erection, which might have been the woolsack of a mediæval Chancellor. The Assembly condescended to rise and bow as I entered; and after making profound demonstrations of respect in reply, I took a seat which had been set apart for me beside the Doge of Andorre.

The discussion turned upon the necessary measures for the defence of the State against

the irruptions of armed Catalonian brigands. The language in which the speakers addressed the assembly, was one which it was seldom difficult to comprehend from the lips of others, though by no means easy to speak. I was, therefore, generally able to understand the tenor of each address.

It was urged by the Syndic, on behalf of the Executive, which he at once constituted and represented, that measures must immediately be taken for the arming and enrolling of the whole adult male population. "The crisis," he said—as far as I could follow his observations, which seemed to gain strength by vehement gesticulation—"was imminent. We were being encompassed by banded brigands, whose numbers and audacity recalled the invasions of the barbarous troops of the Prelates of Urgel and the Counts of Foix. Government would be subverted; there would be neither peace, security, nor law. (Great applause here interrupted the speaker.) We were threatened with dangers greater than those which assailed us from the Carlists. The French Government was now

otherwise engaged abroad. Each man, therefore, to his arms. (Renewed applause.) Each member of the Council of each commune must marshal his subordinates. Each commune must hold the aggregate body in hourly readiness to act. The Viguier must be at his post in the capital, and be ready to concentrate the whole force of the Republic on any point of attack. Each Councillor must look to the weapons of those under his control. And so," concluded the Head of the Commonwealth, "we will provide for the liberty and peace which our forefathers have committed to our keeping."

The Syndic resumed his seat amid great cheering. Several members followed in debate, and resolutions were carried unanimously, calling out the population into active service, and providing for the command and administration of the military force. The Syndic then called the attention of the Council to recommendations which, at his request, I had furnished him in writing, relating to some of the improvements of which I humbly deemed the Commonwealth

susceptible. My suggestions, in consequence of the prevailing glow of military patriotism, were at first rather impatiently received; and I had not the least notion, as I had left Andorre a few days previously to visit Urgel, that I should find those hasty recommendations the subject of deliberation by the most ancient Government of Europe. The Syndic, however, soon procured attention to the document, which I had worded in French, and which he was compelled to translate into Catalonian. The Council voted, to my surprise, that I should be thanked for the interest I had evinced in the affairs of the Republic, and as soon as the urgency of the crisis was past, my recommendations should be taken into consideration. I scarcely knew whether to consider their resolution as a polite method of shelving the question or not; but the Syndic assured me that the Councillors felt a deep interest in the propositions I had advanced; that the English were known to be a highly intelligent people; and that my proposals should receive every attention. It was

finally decided that they should be entertained at the next meeting. Their fate I certainly have not inquired into.

The Council soon afterwards broke up, and we adjourned to a supper worthy of the vast machinery employed in its preparation. The Syndic felt it his duty to propose the health of the Queen of England; but the poor man, it transpired, was labouring under a painful uncertainty as to whether Her Majesty should be styled as "Queen" or "Empress." The toast, however, was enthusiastically responded to, and it was soon evident that I was considered so far the representative of my country as to be expected to make the only acknowledgment which a subject can offer in behalf of his Sovereign, by proposing "the health of the Syndic." The entertainment stretched far into the hours of evening; and with the next day's dawn I was retracing my steps beyond the frontier of the land of Conservative Freedom.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONSTITUTION AND HISTORY OF THE REPUBLIC.

THE historical facts which I here propose to state are deduced, for the most part, from the charters and title-deeds of the Republic, which the Andorrian Government allowed me to consult. These documents, the existence of which is generally unknown, are by far the most ancient and peculiar of all the political or municipal charters that have survived in Western Europe.

Those who bear in mind the difficulty which the illustrious author of the "Middle Ages" has experienced, in consequence of the destruction of all the Italian charters prior to the twelfth century, will appreciate as well the curiosity as the value of these ancient documents. And it is not

the least interesting consideration that, while they serve strikingly to corroborate the account given by Eginhard in the "Annales" of an expedition by Charlemagne into Spain, in the very year to which the first charter of the Emperor relates, they furnish new matter in regard to the Carlovingian history. Time, I regret to say, did not allow me to extend my researches into these valuable charters (of the genuineness of which, I conceive, both from internal and external evidence, there can be no doubt,) further than sufficed to account for the origin, and supply the principal facts in the history of the Republic.

I. The people of Andorre, according to the earliest charter, owe their independence to an event which threatened the subjugation of Europe. The first authentic traditions of the Republic extend beyond the age of Charlemagne, and their earliest written documents bear the signature in behalf of that Emperor, of Louis le Debonnaire. The Andorrians and the Catalonians were in those early periods a common race. The whole region of Catalonia being endangered, toward the close of the eighth century, by the progress of the Moor-

ish arms, the population, in 778, sent a deputation to Charlemagne, imploring his support in defence of their independence and of the Christian faith. The Frankish king, accompanied by his paladins, crossed the Pyrenees, and united his army in the valley of Urgel with the assembled forces of Catalonia, which chiefly consisted of the mountaineers of the district of Andorre. After a brilliant campaign, he effected the extirpation of the Moors as far as the left bank of the Ebro. He then proceeded to establish a military and political organization for the defence of the invaded territory. He recognised in the Andorrians certain peculiar rights, which he afterwards more clearly defined, and granted at the same time to the Bishopric and the Church of Urgel the tithes of the six parishes into which their valleys were even at that early period divided. Here, then, arose the germ of the independence of Andorre, and here also the germ of the pretensions which were afterwards displayed by the See of Urgel.

A second irruption of the Moors having again threatened that independence which the institu-

tions of Charlemagne were intended to preserve, the Emperor of the Romans entrusted the re-establishment of peace to his son Louis le Debonnaire. The joint authority of Charlemagne and of Louis had rewarded the military services of the Andorrians by the grant of their political independence. The ancient document which founded the Republic of Andorre dates from the year 805, and bears the signature of Louis le Debonnaire, who has always been known to the Republic by the title of Ludovicus Pius. The original deed is still preserved in the archives of the Republic.

I was fortunate enough to gain a sight of this title-deed of the Republic. The assemblage of the six consuls, each with his separate key of the chest, locked with six different locks, in which it was deposited, on the occasion of the meeting of the Council, enabled me to peruse whatever might yet be legible of its contents.* The document in question states, that Louis acted

* Great anxiety prevailed on the first assembling Council when only five of the Consuls had arrived, lest the absence of the sixth should prevent the opening of this chest.

by the authority of Charlemagne; and the confirmations of this charter, granted in the course of the ninth century, are attested by the signatures of the succeeding Emperors. The donation of independence is, of course, conveyed in Latin; and the diction of this document struck me as very superior to that of the political deeds of later periods of history. It had not frequently, I suspect, arrested the attention of the ruling body of Andorre, for my friend the Syndic himself, on my adverting to the name of "Ludovicus," —and in a later charter of that prince, "Ludovicus Imperator Augustus,"—expressed his total ignorance as to who that mythical personage might be!

The charter of Louis le Debonnaire commences by recounting the overthrow of the infidels and the restoration of peace. It then relates the principal events of the campaign, and speaks of the miserable condition in which the grantor found the valleys of Andorre. It defines the limits of the Republic, and enjoins the population regularly to plant their vineyards and gardens.

It proceeds afterwards to assert the unquali-

fied independence of their constitution, acknowledging at the same time their right to elect, *si vellent*, a Count as their Protector, against the event of a repeated aggression upon their soil. It further enjoins them to allow every man to obtain an asylum in their territories, so long as he may acquiesce in the laws and customs of the Republic, from whatever quarter he may come. The right of refusing the demands of the French and Spanish Governments for the extradition of political offenders who may take refuge in the territory of the Republic, which this condition in the charter secures, is recognised as well in fact as in law at this day; and has been more than once acquiesced in by the Court of Madrid. This ancient document finally recommends the Andorrian people to establish an absolute equality of rights in their mutual relations, and to ignore peculiar privileges and distinctions of rank.

This explicit donation did not, however, secure the valleys of Andorre from the miseries of a contested sovereignty. The Bishops of Urgel retained their ecclesiastical rights in the free

territory; and in conjunction with the feudal Counts of that city, issued a proclamation asserting the subordination of the rights of Andorre to the See of Urgel, and concluding the document with the customary sacerdotal fulmination, which declared that those by whom the claims of the See might hereafter be invaded should be *ipso facto* excommunicated from the Church, and (also *ipso facto!*) launched into the depths of Hell.

This ancient independence thus enjoyed by the Republic, was first seriously disturbed by the perfidy of Charles the Bald and the insidious encroachments of the Episcopal See. Charles having rewarded the services of the Counts of Urgel with a grant of the sovereignty which he had no authority to confer over the lands of the Republic, a contest arose between the ecclesiastical authority of the Bishop and the territorial arrogations of the Count. The Prelate applied for assistance to Raymond, Count of Foix, proposing at the same time to merge the independence of the valleys in the joint sovereignty of the House of Foix and the See of Urgel. Raymond acceded to the alliance, and expelled the Counts

of Urgel from Andorre. In this manner the Republic underwent a partial eclipse during the twelfth century.

This alliance, however, was soon disturbed. The prelates failed in their promise to surrender to the Counts the moiety of the Republican lands; and hostilities accordingly arose, early in the thirteenth century, between the two rival powers. Bernard, Count of Foix, having, in 1241, laid siege to Urgel, the Bishop of that day was forced to yield to the demands of his enemy, and to undertake, within a specified time, to obtain the Papal ratification of the investiture of the House of Foix in the joint sovereignty in question. The convention being once more broken by the characteristic faithlessness of the See of Urgel, a rupture again took place. At length, in consequence of the intervention of the Churches of Valence and Narbonne, and of some other authorities, a peace was definitively concluded in 1278 which delivered the Republic from further hostilities. In that pacification, it was agreed that the Republic should pay yearly a joint tribute to the Counts of Foix and the Bishops of Urgel; that either

of these authorities in their right of Protectors of the Commonwealth, should have the privilege of nominating one of the two Viguiers, or administrators of justice; and that whenever either Power might find itself in command of the military forces of the Republic, hostilities should not be permitted to subsist between the Bishop and the Count. The joint suzerainete of the County and of the See was *nominally* recognised in this Treaty: it remained, however, a direct violation of the original grant of Charlemagne; and in regard to its practical character, it soon afterwards subsided, if I may paraphrase a legal expression, into a 'Protectorate-in-common.'

II. The House of Foix being subsequently absorbed in that of Béarn, and the House of Béarn again in that of Bourbon, the co-Protectorate of Foix became merged at the close of the sixteenth century in the Government of France. Hence, at this day, the Court of the Tuilleries and the Bishop of Urgel are the Protectors of the Republic. The privileges of the Andorrians have, moreover, at different periods, been acknowledged by the Kings of France and Spain. The French Revolution

having disturbed the relations of the Republic with its chief Protector, a treaty was finally concluded between Napoleon and the Republic, in 1805, in virtue of which the Commonwealth continues to pay an annual tribute of 960 francs, and to receive in return considerable commercial privileges relating to the free export of certain goods and properties from France, on the part of the French government.

This treaty, concluded when the Republic was exactly a thousand years old, bears date twelve years after the deposition of the House of Bourbon. During the interval, the political relations between France and Andorre were altogether suspended, in consequence, as I was informed, of the impossibility, in the view of the Andorrian Magnates, of recognising the merely *de facto* government of the Directory and the Consulate. Whether the assumption of the Imperial Title by Napoleon I. served to recall the days of the Carlovingian rule, or from whatever cause, Andorre sought a renewal of her relations with France in the following year.

It will be seen, then, that the Republic of Andorre possesses a political constitution of the antiquity of between a thousand and eleven hundred years. It will be seen that that State never really lost its jural independence, although, invaded, from time to time, by foreign ambition, and compelled by the violence of the middle ages, to place itself under the protection of Feudal Power. It will be seen that it continues to recognise in practice, beyond comparison of other states of Europe, its most ancient conservative traditions.

The only material point in which we can observe a distinction between the Andorre of the ninth, and the Andorre of the nineteenth century, relates to the exclusive exercise of the powers of government, at this time, by the owners of the soil. The grant of Charlemagne enjoined a general equality of rights among all classes of Andorre, in a spirit characteristic of the liberality of the Austrasian Princes. But we have no evidence to show that the advice of the donor was ever carried out in practice. Supposing that

such had been the original constitution of the Republic, the exclusion of the inferior classes from political power, probably took place during the mediæval irruptions of the Counts of Urgel and Foix, with a view of strengthening the powers of the Central Government in critical conjunctures.

But it is certain, at any rate, that it would be grossly inaccurate to characterise the existing Constitution of Andorre as a system deliberately oligarchical. There can be no alternative between such a constitution and a right of universal suffrage. There is scarcely a single person among the community, other than a landed proprietor, who could be rated as a ten-pound, a five-pound, or, I would almost venture to say, as a forty-shilling householder. Nor, in whatever degree the qualification for the franchise might be reduced, do any inferior distinctions of rank exist, between which it would be practicable to draw a line of demarcation. It is a principle of all stable Governments, that those who are entrusted with the conduct of the collective interests should be possessed of visible and tangible property of their own, to a certain amount, in order

to secure a special interest on the part of the rulers in the fortunes of the State. Such a condition would most certainly be irreconcilable with an extension of the Andorrian suffrage, in the present condition of the national development; and the recognition of a contrary principle would, I am convinced, be productive of disorder far more than commensurate with the advantage resulting from the mission of a more active spirit into the mild and patriarchal sway of the owners of the soil.

Moreover, the legislation of Andorre is marked by no dominance of party interests, but simply by an aim for the public good. The legislators undoubtedly are as conservative as they are in many respects liberal. They maintain, indeed, traditional distinctions of rank. But they throw no restrictions upon the liberty of the inferior classes, whose opinions, as well as interests, they frequently consult, and who, in every other point of view than that of the direct exercise of legislative power, are as free as the members of the Council themselves.

The six districts into which the territory of the Republic is divided are co-extensive with the

six ecclesiastical parishes. The six towns are so many miniature *chefs-lieux*, and have each several hamlets, in addition to the open country, subordinate to their jurisdiction. The names of these towns, or principal villages, are, San Julia, Encamps, Ordino, Massana, Canillo, and Andorre the capital. The population of each town varies from 500 to 800. The total number of the inhabitants of the Republic may be estimated at between seven and eight thousand.

The Constitution of Andorre is strictly neither that of a federal nor of a composite State:—it consists rather of several subordinate legislative bodies, exercising authority within certain limits, and possessed of no legal existence independently of the Central Government. Its constitution is therefore different at once from those of Switzerland, of America, of the United Provinces under their republican polity, and of the German States.

III. The source of the sovereign authority of Andorre exists in the Legislative Councillor of each district. These Councillors are not absolutely identical, as a body, with the landed proprietors, who are a class somewhat more

numerous. They sit, not in virtue of property or election, but as hereditary legislators. The ancestors of certain families now in possession of a share of the soil, obtained, in whatever manner—and on this point great obscurity generally rests—a right of legislation within the district in which their property was situated. This right has descended with the property; and both the invisible and the visible possession are held and transmitted in accordance with our own laws of primogeniture. The French revolutionary system of the partition of real property in its descent from generation to generation, has therefore found no place in the customs of Andorre. From this system, although the genius of the landowners runs strongly counter to changes of possession, new proprietors have occasionally arisen, or old proprietors, originally precluded from the Council, have arrived at positions of greater consequence. It is competent to the heredifary legislators to add to their number, by summoning at any time an unfranchised proprietor to the Council; and as the more ancient and considerable landholders are already found

among this body, it has naturally become their practice to elect any excluded member who may approach themselves in point of territorial consideration. It must necessarily happen, however, that these additions to the legislative Council in any district are of very rare occurrence. The number of Councillors in each district varies probably from twenty-five to fifty.

The executive functions of each of these six districts are confided in two Consuls, who are members of the supreme Council. Of these the First Consul, like the principal Syndic, is practically alone charged with the public administration, and his colleague is little more than a contingent deputy. The election of these officers, who are chosen from the local legislature, requires the nominal confirmation either of the French Government or of the Bishop of Urgel, according to the mediæval law. The practice of confirmation is not, however, invariably observed. The legislative and executive functions of these authorities are limited in extent.

As the Councils of the different districts possess the original authority of the Republic,

so the central Council of the capital possesses the derivative, and also the supreme, authority, inasmuch as it exercises the collective power of the whole body of legislators. This supreme Council is composed of twenty-four members, of whom an equal number is elected by each district from among its own body. It consists of the two consuls for the current, and of the two ex-consuls for the preceding, year, as the representatives of each of the six parishes. The Councillors thus go out in rotation, holding their executive rights for one, and their legislative powers for two years.

In a similar manner the Syndic is elected by the supreme Council, but on a tenure of pleasure; though his office is usually held for life. He discharges the supreme executive functions of the Republic; and is in fact, as was the Doge of Venice, (if I may be pardoned for the analogy) its representative. He grants passports; controls the central administrative duties; and conducts the negotiations and correspondence of the Republic with foreign states, although the international relations of Andorre are now alto-

gether restricted to the two courts of France and Spain.

IV. The lands of Andorre are divided into the property of individuals and the property of the State. The valleys usually belong to the former, the highlands to the latter. The mountain property of the State consists both of pasture and woods, and is also divided into portions common and public. The common State lands again recognise minor divisions into four equal parts, one of which is assigned to every one or two parishes, according to their population, and an officer is appointed for the supervision of each. Every member of the community, whether landowner or peasant, enjoys an equal right of pasturage over the common lands of the parish to which he may belong.

The public lands—and the whole of the woodland, which forms the remainder of the common lands—are the sources of the revenue of the State. The former are the rich mountain pastures on the Spanish frontier, which the Andorrian Council let for the summer months to the Spanish proprietors of the valley of Urgel for

the pasturage of their flocks. The woods recognise a similar division with the other common lands; and the surplus of their annual produce, over and above the requirements of individuals, is sold by the Consuls of each district to the proprietors of the different forges in the Republic.

The whole population of Andorre thus obtain their supplies of fuel gratuitously, while the revenues arising from the wood and public lands totally dispense with the evils of taxation. When will such a system be introduced by a French or an English Minister of Finance? We think ourselves fortunate in this country where an increase of direct taxation is marked by a corresponding decrease of the indirect. When shall we witness the extinction both of the one and the other, and one necessary article of universal consumption gratuitously supplied?

V. The judicial organisation and judicial procedures are very singular. The French Government and the Bishop of Urgel, as I have said, exercise the power, as a relic of their old feudal superiority, of appointing the two Viguiers. The Viguier appointed by France is nominated

for life, and is generally a magistrate of the proximate department of Ariège, while the officer appointed by the Bishop must be chosen from among the subjects of the Republic, and holds office for three years. On the appointment of a Viguier, the Syndic assembles the Councillors, two of whom, after the celebration of a mass in the Council chapel, escort the new functionary with great intended *éclat* through the town. On their return to the Council-house they introduce him formally to the Councillors, who receive him with their heads uncovered, although he has probably been for many years one of their boon companions. He then takes an oath of fidelity to the State, kneeling on one knee, with his hands placed between those of the Syndic. The Viguier then takes his seat; reads the deed of his appointment; the Syndic announces his installation; and the proceeding terminates in a *fête* enjoyed by the community, and a dinner served for the Councillors, consisting of an unlimited supply of trout, *gigôts*, and *vin d'Espagne!*

The Viguiers exercise the criminal authority of the law alone. Civil justice is rendered by

two other judges, whose authority emanates from the Viguiers, and one of whom is appointed by each Viguier from a list of six members drawn up and presented by the Syndic. Their functions are discharged with less formality than those of the criminal judges.*

On the commission of a crime and the discovery of its probable perpetrator, the Council is convoked, and after the celebration of a mass, which seems necessary in Andorre to give to every public proceeding its lawful initiation, and the performance of some other ceremonies, the criminal tribunal of the Viguier is supposed to be legally constituted.

There is no trial by jury, and there is no written law. The presiding Viguier is attended by two members of the Council, who watch over

* It is clear from the mode of investiture which is adopted in regard to the Viguiers, that the judicial authority, in theory at least, emanates from the Republican Government, and not from the nominating Protectors. A form of investiture, in which the person invested takes office by kneeling and placing his hands between those of another, inevitably implies the act of donation. His swearing fidelity to the State is similarly incompatible with an exercise of foreign judicial power.

the conduct of proceedings in accordance with the usages of the State. Both in criminal and civil causes, equity and custom alone guide the decision of the judges. Yet the tendency of such a system to the infringement of individual liberty does not appear to be borne out in practice. No complaints are heard regarding the conduct of the courts; and the popular acquiescence in the operation of oral law affords a striking contrast to the reputed necessity of our intermediate Acts of Parliament.

The decision of the criminal court is communicated to the Council, who reassemble to receive it. Whether this Council would be held to possess the power of modifying its character it would be difficult to say; and the constitutional maxims of the country have not been very clearly defined; but I apprehend that the guardians of conservative tradition would not willingly allow any deviation from established custom to be carried into effect; although, on the other hand, the greater danger of injustice would probably arise in regard to the fairness of deductions from evidence, which their imperfect supervision would

scarcely enable them to detect. The sentence of the court, once proclaimed by the Council, is regarded as irrevocable, and is put in execution within twenty-four hours.

A court of appeal exists only upon the civil side. Its presiding functionary is an advocate, nominated alternately by the Government of France and the See of Urgel, who sits from time to time as judge in review of the decisions of his two subordinates. Parties to suits, both criminal and civil, have also the right of appearing by counsel, there being three advocates in the Republic. Had I been sufficiently acquainted with the Catalan language I should have been interested and amused in listening to these gentlemen, as they handled some of those nice points of jural right which must from time to time present themselves in spite of the simplest laws.

The military organisation of Andorre is identical with that which was instituted by the Republic under the direction of Charlemagne. The male inhabitants of a certain age are all soldiers. Each head of a family is absolutely required to possess a musket and ammunition for himself; and this

requisition, in critical times, extends with the same urgency to his adult sons. The command of the army is sometimes intrusted to the Viguiers; and the divisions of the military force follow the cardinal divisions of the Republic, each of the six districts having its proportionate force, with a captain and two lieutenants in command of every division. The Government usually holds an annual review of the army of the Republic in each of its military or political divisions.

With scarcely any exceptions, the duties of the State are gratuitously discharged by the authorities on whom they may fall. The Syndic and his deputy, the Viguiers, the consuls, and the other members of Council, hold honorary offices. The military service is similarly gratuitous, the necessary expenses that may arise in consequence of the inability of individuals to purchase their necessary equipment being defrayed by the ordinary revenues of the State.

VI. The commercial system of Andorre, as existing *de facto*, has been already characterised as comprehending a tariff for the free exportation of certain articles of consumption from France into

the territory of the Republic, and a regular contraband traffic in tobacco and some other products exported from Andorre into France and Spain.

Such, then, are the social and political characteristics of the people of Andorre. Their independence sprang from the very danger of their extirpation. Their rights revived from the withering desolation of feudal violence. They never experienced the restless ambition of the Kings of Arragon and Castile, of the House of Valois or of Bourbon. They enjoyed the unvarying friendship of Napoleon. The French Revolutionary Code failed to supplant their simple but ancient laws. The influence of the Romish Priesthood was never suffered to work their mental subjugation. If the Italian Republic of San Marino boast of equal antiquity, it possesses neither the same marvellous history, the same moral freedom, nor the same idiosyncrasy of social constitution. Its surrounding states, *like itself*, are Italian; it is identical with its neighbours in origin, in sympathies, in social character, and in religious superstition. But the

people of Andorre have no common origin with the French, no religious or social similarity to the Spaniards, and no sympathies with either. The natural disadvantages of their situation perpetuating their poverty and want of cultivation, it may seem questionable at first sight, whether they would not gain by their annexation to the French Empire? The sacrifice of so much political tradition, of so much love of independence, would be great; but the problem may, I think, be conclusively solved by contrasting their contented and peaceful virtue with the misery and demoralisation of many of the French borderers. They possess the intrinsic qualifications, in as great a degree as they want the artificial elements of real wealth. And if there is no community in the world which fully represents the conditions of a perfect moral state, yet where can so fair an Utopia be conceived as in the heart of mountains, secluded from the interests and influences of the common world, adorned by the Beautiful in Nature, and peopled by all that is simple, and just, and benevolent in Man? And whenever the violence of Foreign Power shall again threaten

an independence which it has ever yet been unable definitively to subvert, may the Memory of the past and the Patriotism of the hour unite to defend and perpetuate their Sabine hardihood, their English liberty, and their Spartan virtue!

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

THE CLAIM OF THE REPUBLIC OF ANDORRE TO THE RANK OF AN INDEPENDENT STATE.

It may be desirable to state, briefly and succinctly, the claims which this Republic possesses, under the original political institution, and the subsequent political relations, which have been described in the last chapter, to a position of equality, in the view of international law, with the independent Governments of Europe. This indeed is a point, not only of some curiosity to jurists, but of indirect interest to all who may entertain any sympathy with the Republic; inasmuch as it involves the question—if I may use these terms in their ordinary, though not perhaps their correct application—of the political or municipal character of its polity. It would greatly diminish the claim of the Andorrian Government to consideration at this day, if its independent existence were to be regarded rather as a matter of political archæology than as a present fact. I have looked in vain through the works of those jural writers, who more especially have founded principles of international jurisprudence on the basis of the existing Constitutions

of Europe, for references to the Republic of Andorre, in support of any one of the legal theories which its example serves to illustrate.

I have already described this State as a Sovereign, Federal, Aristocratic Commonwealth. Its aristocratic character rests in its legislative functions being exclusively discharged by a body of hereditary landholders: its federal constitution in the necessary aggregation of six distinct municipal communities, each with its local legislative body, in one political community. The essential difference of this federation from that of any other federal body in Europe or America is therefore sufficiently obvious.

The third position, that the Republic is also sovereign or independent, seems to call for clearer demonstration, with a view of considering the relation of the qualifications imposed at different periods on this sovereignty, to the qualifications which international law has already acknowledged to be consistent with a condition of political independence.

By the terms of the original Carlovingian charter, the people of Andorre received a grant both of territorial and political sovereignty, qualified only by an antecedent right of tithe over the parishes in which this republic was comprehended, which had been vested in the See of Urgel. No form of sovereignty exactly similar to this is perhaps to be found in Europe; but it would be easy to point out qualifications of independence, virtually equivalent to the present instance

in several of the Germanic States, whose independent rank is of course unquestionable.

It appears, as we have seen, from the archives of the Republic that the exercise of the republican sovereignty was first assailed in consequence of a grant of the lands of Andorre on the part of Charles the Bald to the Counts of Urgel. That such a grant, however, could not legally destroy that sovereignty is obvious from the circumstance that it was not complete either in theory or in fact. In the first place, the grant in question was totally illegal, both according to the direct terms of international law, and according to the analogy of municipal law. By the former code, a State once independent is beyond the jurisdiction of another State. By the latter, if we were to view the grant of Charlemagne in the light of a mere internal charter of incorporation, the jurisprudence both of this and of almost every other country would require the concurrence of the incorporator and of the incorporatee, unless it could be shown that the corporation had by overt acts forfeited the conditions of its existence. No special conditions of independence, however, were affixed to the Carlovingian charter; and it was obviously no more in the power of the French Sovereigns to revoke that treaty than it is now in the power of the British Government to revoke the Treaty of 1783, which asserted the independence of the United States. The original right of Charlemagne to confer this independence, notwithstanding the ill-defined territorial rights which often

formed the basis of that Sovereign's policy, was in this instance complete, inasmuch as it proceeded on the fact of conquest under a state of open war. No flaw, therefore, can be alleged in the republican title.

While, then, the grant by Charles the Bald was a grant non-existent in law, full possession was not obtained under it by the Counts of Urgel. It was, therefore, also non-existent in fact.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as we have seen, the territory was ravaged by the forces of the Bishops of Urgel and the Counts of Foix, whose alliance disappointed the aggression of the Counts of Urgel. It was finally concluded, however, by the Treaty of Urgel, in 1278, that the right of suzerainetè should be possessed jointly by the Bishop and the Count of Foix. This suzerainetè has been shown to have formed simply a joint protectorate. The Carlovingian charter had suggested to the Andorrians the election of a Protector; and they had already elected the Counts of Foix. It was the effect of the Treaty of Urgel, therefore, to impose an additional Protector on the Republic, together with certain qualifications of sovereignty, which may be stated and considered as follows:—

First—The existence of a Protectorial right, in the institution of which the Republic did not take the initiative.

This, however, cannot essentially differ from the protectorate established by the Treaty of Vienna over the Republic of Cracow: nor from that established over

the kingdom of Greece: nor from that established by the Ottoman Porte over the kingdom of Hungary. Yet these states are all independent. Even guarantees, such as that established in the Treaty of Westphalia over Germany, do not trench on sovereignty. And I have found no record on the conclusion of any Treaty of Guarantee affecting the Republic of Andorre.

Secondly—The payment of tribute by the Republic to its Protectors.

This relation is similar to that of the kingdom of Hungary to the Porte—and to that of the Maritime Powers to the Barbary States.—In each of these instances the payment has been coincident with the recognition of independent rank. So again has the vassalage of the Crown of the Two Sicilies to the Papacy.

Moreover, while these instances involve treaties of unequal alliance, the treaty enforcing tribute from Andorre to the Counts of Foix is a treaty of equal alliance; inasmuch as the French Government—the modern Protector in right of the Counts of Foix—have relaxed the imposts in a corresponding degree, in consideration of this tribute.

Thirdly—The existence of an obligation upon the Republic for the supply of a military contingent to its Protectors.

This obligation is by no means clearly defined: nor does it appear to have been ever called into force. Even, however, conceding its existence, it can be only regarded as analogous to the cognate stipulations

between France and Prussia in the Treaty of Tilsit, and between France and Austria, in the Treaty of Schönbrunn, which were moreover called into force.

Fourthly—The French Government and the See of Urgel possess a co-ordinate right of confirmation over the appointment of the Syndic, the chief magistrate of the Republic.

The Emperors of Germany and the Kings of Poland were themselves subject to a similar right of foreign confirmation. Similarly, the Sovereigns of Austria, France, and Spain, possessed an ancient right of excluding a Competitor from election to the Pontificate.

Fifthly—The Protectors possess a right, subject to certain conditions, of nominating a Viguier, or officer of Justice.

These officers, however, can administer the Republican Laws only, and in conjunction with two members of the Andorrian Council. It has been seen, moreover, that they take their appointment from the Syndic —that they swear fidelity to the Republic. It can, therefore, scarcely be said, that any real qualification of the Judicial Power is here observable. The qualification is certainly far less definite than that which has been imposed on the Ottoman Porte by the Diplomatic and Consular officers of the Christian Powers, in all matters in which their own subjects are involved on either side, since their officers not only assert the Turkish jurisdiction, but displace the Turkish law.

On the other hand, the Republic appears to possess every essential attribute of Sovereignty. It enjoys

1. A full right of Legislation.
2. A full right of Territorial Integrity.
3. A full right of Negotiation and Treaty.
4. A full right of Legation.
5. A full right of refusing Extradition of all Offenders, whether civil or political, which is laid down in the Carlovingian Charter, and is maintained in practice at this day.
6. A full right of levying war.

This latter right has subsisted in theory alone. Whether the relations of the Republic to the French Government, as its Protector, are incompatible or not with the exercise of this right towards France, I will not undertake to say: but it is clear at any rate that such a restriction, if existing, must be reciprocal; and that it can in no greater degree qualify the independence of Andorre than that of France.

I cannot speak positively in reference to the Treaties which have been concluded between Andorre and Spain. It is obvious, however, that disparity of strength would prevent the Republic from assuming an attitude of hostility to that State, although the adage would still apply to their mutual relation, "That Geneva is as independent as Russia."

There can be no doubt that if a *casus belli* were to arise between Andorre and any German or Italian State, a treaty of military transport with the French Government

would legally enable the former to march its forces to the German or Italian frontier. That the event is as improbable as the spectacle would be ludicrous, does not affect the international doctrine of independent rank. The relation of Andorre to the State in question would then be similar to that in which the Sardinian Government would have recently stood towards Russia, if they had been able to conclude a similar treaty of transport with the Court of Vienna.

The Republic of Andorre is therefore a Sovereign State of Europe, and is the same State with that founded by Charlemagne in 805.

THE END.

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